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ABSTRACT

This manual covers laws and regulations, responsibilities, policies, equipment, communication, and guidelines for transporting Iowa public school students with specific disabilities. The first section summarizes requirements of federal and state law, followed by a section on responsibilities of such entities as the Department of Education, the area education agency, local education administrators, drivers, and parents. Guidelines for transportation and the Individual Education Plan (IEP) are covered next, including the role of transportation in the assessment process and development of a transportation plan. Other guidelines cover: policy/procedure development; training of school staff, supervisors, and drivers; assistive devices and information sources; and routing and scheduling. A section on communications and relationships looks at communication with parents, students, teachers, the general public, and mechanics; parental rights; and requesting a special education hearing. Guidelines are given for specific conditions (e.g., juvenile arthritis, auditory problems, autism, mental retardation, muscular dystrophy, and spina bifida). A self-evaluation process for pupil transportation services is suggested. Concluding the document are a variety of sample forms, lists of resources, opinions of the Iowa state Attorney General, rulings of the federal Office of Special Education Programs, and relevant sections of the Iowa code. (DB)

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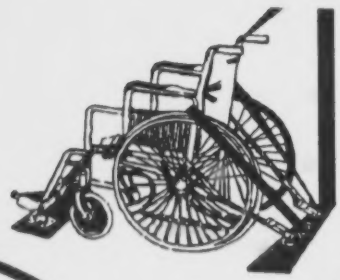

Transporting Students with Disabilities

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A Manual for Transportation Supervisors

State of Iowa
Department of Education

EC 301758

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LAWS, RULES, & REGULATIONS

The transportation administrator and other appropriate staff need to become familiar with the following laws, rules, regulations, and guidelines. They provide the framework within which the policies, procedures, and guidelines need to be developed for all Special Education Transportation Services provided by the school district. The purpose of this section is to provide specific information about the laws, rules, and regulations that impact on the transportation services offered for special needs students. The information, though general in nature, does contain adequate information to guide those persons responsible for pupil transportation in developing an action plan for the safe delivery of transportation services for special needs students.

The term **"Special Education"** means specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of a handicapped student. Transportation is one of the **"related services"** required when necessary to provide such instruction.

Note: The term handicapped is no longer an appropriate designation. As will be discussed later in this section, IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) changed the designation to students or persons with disabilities. Unless a direct quote, the term handicapped will not be used in this manual. Instead reference will be made to students or persons with disabilities.

Federal Laws

Section 504 of P.L. 93-112, a part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, states in part:

> No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. In general terms, Section 504 requires that all handicapped students (regardless of age) are eligible for a free, appropriate public education. It also requires the facility, services, and activities provided to the handicapped be compatible to those provided to non-handicapped, and that handicapped students must have an equal opportunity for participation in any nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities provided by a school district. It is possible for a school district to be required to provide specialized transportation services to a handicapped student who is not in special education.

Note: There may be instances in which a student might be temporarily in need of special transportation services but may not be labelled as a recipient of special education services. Examples might include a student who has both legs in a cast as a result of an accident and must use a wheelchair for the duration of the casting, e.g. 6 - 8 weeks. The student, if entitled to transportation by statute (285.1 of the Iowa Code) or district policy, would be entitled to transportation services only to the extent that the district is capable of providing it. Options to the district include transporting on a district owned vehicle, contracting with a private party (285.5, the Iowa Code) and parent reimbursement [285.1(3), Iowa Code].

Public Law 94:142. the **Education for All Handicapped Children Act** (EHA), was passed in 1975 and went into effect in October of 1977 when the regulations were finalized. Congress, through the Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1983 (P.L. 98-199), amended or changed the law to expand incentives for preschool special education programs, early intervention, and transition programs.

In 1986, EHA was again amended through P.L 99-457, the Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments. One important outcome of these amendments was that the eligibility age for children with disabilities requiring special education and related services was lowered to age three, a change to be implemented by school year 1991-1992. The law also established the Handicapped Infants and Toddlers Program (Part H). As specified by law, this program is directed to the needs of children, from birth to their third birthday, who need early intervention services. In addition, under this program, the infant or toddler's family may receive services that are needed to help them assist in the development of their child. States can vary their definition of eligibility under this program.

EHA makes it possible for states and local education agencies to receive federal funds to assist in the education of infants, toddlers, preschoolers, repeating and youth with disabilities. Basically, in order to remain eligible for federal funds under the law, states must assure that:

> All children and youth with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disability, will receive a **Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)**--at public expense.
>
> Education of children and youth with disabilities will be based on a **complete, individual evaluation, and assessment** of specific, unique needs of each child.
>
> **An Individualized Education Program (IEP), or an Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP)** will be drawn up for every child or youth found eligible for special education or early intervention services.

To the maximum extent appropriate, all children and youth with disabilities will be educated in the **regular education environment**.

Children and Youth receiving special education have the right to receive the **related services** necessary to benefit from special education instruction.

As a part of the mandate of a free appropriate public education, "Related Services, are required when determined necessary to assist a handicapped child to benefit from special education." Transportation is a related service under P.L 94-142, and is defined to include:

1. Travel to and from school and between schools.

2. Travel in and around school buildings.

3 Specialized equipment (such as special or adaptive buses, lifts, and ramps) if required to provide special education for a handicapped child.

Other provisions made in the law include the following:

Parents have the right to participate in every decision related to the identification, evaluation, and placement of their child or youth with a disability.

Parents must give consent for any initial evaluation, assessment, or placement; be notified of any changes that may occur; and be included in conferences and meetings to discuss their child before changes go into effect for the first time.

Note: This would include a change or modification in the manner and type of transportation or assistive device being used.

Parents can challenge and appeal any decision related to identification, evaluation, and placement, or any issue concerning the provision of FAPE through **due process procedures.**

Parents have the right to **confidentiality of information.** No one may see a child's records unless the parents give their written permission. (The exception to this are school personnel with legitimate educational interests.)

Note: "A student's medical records as they might appear in the student's educational file are confidential. Thus a student with AIDS (or asthma, diabetes or epilepsy, for that matter) has the right to expect that his or her medical status will be kept in confidence. Exception: Special education 'related services' needs.
...The 'need to know' should be based on the possibility of a student's need for emergency treatment, special precautions to prevent aggravation of a student's condition, or similar situations. Those entrusted with the confidential information are not free to redisseminate or pass on this information, at least not without fear of legal consequences."[1]

In October 1990, Congress passed the Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1990 (P.L. 101-476). Some significant changes resulted with this new law. The name of the law, the Education of the Handicapped Act (EHA), will now be called the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).** Many discretionary programs authorized under the law have been expanded and new ones created to include special programs on transition, and to improve services for those with serious emotional disturbance. The services and rights under this law are expanded to more fully include children with autism and traumatic brain injury.

Note: You should begin to hear and use the term "disability" to refer to students instead of the word "handicapped".

The **Individual with Disabilities Education Act** and **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973** strengthen each other in important areas. For example, they both:

-call for school systems to carry out a systematic search for every child with a disability in need of a public education,

-mandate a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) regardless of the nature and severity of an individual's disability,

-make it clear that education and related services must be provided at no cost to parents,

-have similar requirements to assure that testing and evaluation of a child's need are not based on a single testing instrument, and

-emphasize the importance of educating children and youth with disabilities with their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate.

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[1] "Breach of Confidentiality: The New Lawsuit", by Kathy Collins, Administrative Legal Consultant for the Iowa Department of Education, *Dispatch*, vol 18, No 4, January, 1989, p. 7.

Note: Integration NOT only in the regular classroom, but also on regular route buses.

The **Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)** is another Federal Law (P.L. 101-336) that requires that public transportation be accessible to all persons with disabilities. For companies primarily engaged in the business of transporting people:

New vehicles (excluding automobiles) that have seating capacities of 8 passengers or more must be accessible if purchased after August 26, 1990. (New vehicles do not have to be accessible if used solely in a demand-response system that, when viewed in its entirety, already provides equivalent services to people with disabilities.)

For companies *not* primarily engaged in the business of transporting people:

New vehicles that have seating capacities of 16 or more passengers and are not used on a fixed route system must be accessible if bought after August 26, 1990. (New vehicles that have seating capacities of 16 or less passengers, are used over a fixed route system, and have been purchased after August 26, 1990, may have to be accessible if the system is not currently providing equivalent service when viewed in its entirety.)

Note: The requirements of this legislation are not applied to "public school transportation" since such services are subject to the requirements of section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and it is not the intent of the legislation to require school systems receiving Federal financial assistance to meet any different requirements under this legislation than are currently required under section 504.

Code of Iowa

The Code of Iowa includes two chapters that mandate transportation for education as well as provides rules and regulations governing the provision of such transportation. Chapter 285 describes general transportation and Chapter 281 describes special education transportation.

Iowa Administrative Code

The Iowa Administrative Code, Chapters 41, 43, and 44, provide legal requirements, rules, and regulations relevant to school transportation. Chapter 41 provides special education requirements. Chapter 43 outlines the general school transportation requirements, and Chapter 44 outlines the minimum standards for construction of school transportation equipment. Chapter 44.4 (285) presents the standards for construction of vehicles for children with mobility problems of such severity that they can not use regular service door entrances on vehicles. Chapter 44.4 is printed in the section of this manual "Vehicle Specifications & Other

Equipment." Paragraph 8 of Chapter 41[2] below outlines the rules and regulations related to transportation for students in special education.

281-41.8(281) Transportation. Transportation of pupils requiring special education shall generally be provided as for other pupils, when appropriate. Specialized transportation of a pupil to and from a special education instructional program is a function of that program and, therefore, an appropriate expenditure of funds generated through the weighted enrollment.

41.8(1) *Special Arrangements.* Transportation of a pupil to and from a special education support program or service is a function of that program or service, shall be specified in the IEP and is an appropriate expenditure of funds generated for special education support services, When, because of a pupil's disability or because of the location of the program, the diagnostic-educational team determines that unique transportation arrangements are required and the arrangements are specified in the IEP, the local school district shall be required to provide one or more of the following transportation arrangements for instructional programs and the AEA for support services:

a. Transportation from the pupil's residence to the location of the special education and back to the pupil's residence.
b. Special assistance or adaptations in getting the pupil to and from and on and off the vehicle, en route to and from the special education.
c. Reimbursement of the actual costs of transportation when it is necessary for parents to provide transportation for the pupil to and from the special education.
d. Agencies are not required to provide reimbursement to parents who elect to provide transportation in lieu of agency provided transportation.

41.8(2) *Responsibility for Transportation.*

a. The AEA shall provide the cost of transportation of pupils to and from special education support services or programs. The AEA shall provide the cost of transportation which is necessary for the provision of special education support programs or services to nonpublic school pupils if the cost of that transportation is in addition to the cost of transportation provided for special education instructional programs.
b. When pupils enrolled in nonpublic schools are dually enrolled in public schools to receive special education instructional programs, transportation provisions between nonpublic and public attendance centers will be the responsibility of the school district of residence.
c. Transportation of pupils, when required for educational diagnostic purposes, is a special education support service and, therefore, an appropriate expenditure of funds generated for special education support programs and services.

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[2]Iowa Department of Education, Rules of Special Education, 1990.

41.8(3) *Purchase of Transportation Equipment.* When it is necessary for a school district to purchase equipment to transport pupils to a weighted instructional program, this equipment shall be purchased from the district's general fund. The direct purchase of transportation equipment is not an appropriate expenditure of funds generated through the weighted enrollment for special education. A written schedule of depreciation for this transportation equipment shall be developed by the district. An annual charge to special education weighted dollars for depreciation of the equipment shall be made and reported as a special education transportation cost in the Special Education Supplement to the Secretary's Annual Report. Annual depreciation charges, except in unusual circumstances, shall be calculated according to the directions provided for the Annual Transportation Report completed by the district and adjusted to reflect the proportion special education mileage is of the total annual mileage.

41.8(4) *Lease of Transportation equipment.* A local district may elect to lease equipment to transport pupils to a weighted instructional program. Cost of the lease, or that portion of the lease attributable to special education transportation expense, shall be considered a special education transportation cost and reported in the Special Education Supplement to the Secretary's Annual Report.

41.8(5) *Transportation Equipment Safety Standards.* All transportation equipment either purchased or leased by a district to transport special education pupils to weighted instructional programs, must conform to the transportation equipment safety and construction standards contained in 281-Chapters 43 and 44.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR TRANSPORTATION

Your success in school transportation operations depends largely upon the quality of performance and degree of dedication displayed by those involved. The recommendations outlined below are presented to assist you in understanding the needs of particular pupil transportation programs. The list of responsibilities represents the ideal. Determine how close you come to meeting the ideal by placing a check mark in the space indicating either yes, these responsibilities are being carried out or no, these responsibilities are not being met.

The Department of Education[1]

The Department of Education should provide the following:

Yes	No		
___	___	1.	Leadership in the development of a comprehensive pupil transportation program for state-wide application.
___	___	2.	A consultant for school transportation and resources necessary for optimal job performance.
___	___	3.	A clear, concise pupil transportation policy.
___	___	4.	A cost-accounting system for all expenditures in the area of pupil transportation.
___	___	5.	A state-wide management information system to accommodate pupil transportation data, e.g., costs, information gleaned from the uniform school bus accident reporting criteria, manpower availability, etc.
___	___	6.	Promotion of a pupil transportation safety program utilizing community, school districts, school bus contractors, legislation, media, law enforcement, and state agencies concerned with pupil transportation.
___	___	7.	A manual or handbook for local pupil transportation supervisors, school administrators, and private contractors containing detailed instructions for implementing the state's transportation laws, regulations, and policies.

[1] National Standards for School Buses and Operations, 1990 Revised Edition. p. 32.

Yes	No		
___	___	8.	A manual or handbook for each school bus driver containing the state pupil transportation regulations and recommended safety practices.
___	___	9.	A comprehensive school bus driver program for both pre-service and in-service instruction which includes classroom and behind-the-wheel instruction.
___	___	10.	A manual or handbook for school bus maintenance personnel.
___	___	11.	Workshops, seminars, and/or conferences for all pupil transportation personnel.
___	___	12.	Encouragement for state institutions of higher education to provide undergraduate and graduate courses acceptable for certification purposes in pupil transportation, operation, and safety.
___	___	13.	Comprehensive safety and ridership curricula for pupil passengers.
___	___	14.	Annual visits to local education agencies to evaluate transportation systems and provide necessary direction.
___	___	15.	Bus and equipment standards that would be conducive to safer and more efficient bus performance.
___	___	16.	Require proper school bus preventative maintenance and ongoing maintenance programs.
___	___	17.	Coordination with other agencies having responsibility for pupil transportation services, including the uniform school bus accident reporting criteria.
___	___	18.	A comprehensive education program to train instructors of school bus drivers.

Department of Education Consultant for School Transportation[2]

The DOE consultant's specific duties include, but are not limited to the following:

Yes	No		
___	___	1.	Assist in the implementation, interpretation, and understanding of pupil transportation laws, regulations, and policies.
___	___	2.	Manage the state's pupil transportation program which includes the ability to plan, budget, and forecast requirements for the operation.
___	___	3.	Supervise the preparation of manuals, handbooks and information for distribution to local transportation personnel and private operators.
___	___	4.	Provide assistance and direction to local school administrators as may be necessary upon request.
___	___	5.	Assist in evaluation of state and local operations, including bus routes, and provide recommendations in areas of policy and procedures.
___	___	6.	Plan, direct, and participate in safety education for pupil transportation personnel.
___	___	7.	Assist local personnel in planning and conducting pupil safety education program.
___	___	8.	Require and maintain appropriate reports and records.
___	___	9.	Assist/consult with groups involved in pupil transportation safety.
___	___	10.	Represent the interests of the pupil transportation industry.
___	___	11.	Work cooperatively with school transportation associations, school districts, and private contractors to promote school bus safety and efficiency.

[2]Ibid., p. 33.

The Role of the Area Education Agency[3]

The following list represents the duties and responsibilities of the AEA consultants in determining special education services for students:

Yes No

___ ___ 1. Guide and assist the IEP team in determining appropriate placement, instructional programming, and related services.

___ ___ 2. Assist district with team coordination and contacts.

___ ___ 3. Facilitate discussions of individual student's needs.

___ ___ 4. Provide districts with current information on transportation issues.

___ ___ 5. Compile and provide information on resources and vendors which may assist districts.

___ ___ 6. Provide continuing education experiences.

___ ___ 7. Provide media which would provide and assist with inservice training.

___ ___ 8. Facilitate team process training when warranted.

Local Education Administrators[4]

Local education administrators shall need to provide support for the special transportation program in a number of ways:

Yes No

___ ___ 1. Comply with federal and state pupil transportation laws, regulations, and policy.

___ ___ 2. Become involved in:

___ ___ a. pupil transportation operations within their jurisdiction, including participating in training programs for all transportation personnel,

Yes No

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[3]"Students With Special Transportation Needs: Creating an Interdisciplinary Awareness" Conference held in Ames Iowa May 9 & 10, 1989.

[4]National Standards for School Buses & Operations, 1990 Revised Edition, p. 32.

___ ___ b. review of school bus routes,

___ ___ c. provisions for supervision of loading and unloading areas at or near the school,

___ ___ d. investigation and reporting of accidents, and other transportation problems, and

___ ___ e. evaluation of the pupil transportation system.

___ ___ 3. Provide resource materials and establish, as an integral part of the school curriculum, instruction in passenger safety, including student participation in periodic emergency evacuation drills, which comply with state requirements and/or Federal Highway Safety Program Guidelines 17.

___ ___ 4. Provide continuous supervision of loading and unloading areas at or near the school. Annually evaluate route pickup and drop-off locations for safety.

___ ___ 5. Provide adequate supervision for pupils whose bus schedules necessitate their early arrival or late departure from school.

___ ___ 6. Promote public understanding of, and support for, the school transportation program in general.

___ ___ 7. Develop and implement local pupil transportation policies and regulations, including those for special education.

___ ___ 8. Provide transportation personnel the opportunity for growth in job related activities.

The Role of the Special Education Nurse[5]

The following represent some of the duties and responsibilities related to transportation that the special education nurse might assume:

Yes No

___ ___ 1. To understand state and federal rules and regulations as well as local education agency policies and procedures.

Yes No

___ ___ 2. Participate in the IEP Team meeting ensuring transportation health considerations, including the following:

---

[5]"Students with Special Transportation Needs:. . . .

___ ___ length of transport
___ ___ pickup, transfer, and drop-off procedure
___ ___ vehicle options
___ ___ assistive devices, equipment
___ ___ plans for returning ill students

___ ___ 3. Assist with training and inservice in the following areas: first aid, CPR, specific devices or equipment, specific disabilities, and chronic health conditions.

___ ___ 4. Assist with identifying and training for emergency situations on board the bus, i.e., emergency evacuations, nearest emergency care facilities.

___ ___ 5. Advocate for carrying written information, including authorization from physician, parents, written procedures, indications and possible reactions.

The Local Pupil Transportation Director and/or Private Operator[6]

The local director of transportation, whether an employee of the school system or a private operator, has specific duties which may include:

Yes No

___ ___ 1. Provide assistance in planning, budgeting, and forecasting for the pupil transportation system.

___ ___ 2. Assist in school site selection and plant planning.

___ ___ 3. Provide, when appropriate, chassis, body, and related equipment procurement.

___ ___ 4. Develop and implement a plan for equipment preventative and on-going maintenance, and procurement.

___ ___ 5. Recruit, select, instruct, and supervise personnel.

___ ___ 6. Route and schedule buses for safe, efficient, and economical transportation service.

Yes No

___ ___ 7. Assist in the development and implementation of pupil safety education programs.

---

[6]Ibid.

___ ___ 8. Work with administrators, teachers, transportation personnel, students, parents, and various public and private agencies to improve their knowledge and the quality of the transportation system.

___ ___ 9. Investigate and report accidents, when applicable, using the uniform school bus accident reporting criteria, as well as problems associated with the pupil transportation system.

___ ___10. Maintain records and prepare reports as required.

___ ___11. Develop and supervise the implementation of an ongoing evaluation plan for the pupil transportation system.

___ ___12. Collect information prior to the initial date of transport of disabled students.

___ ___13. Collect pre-planning information regarding health status and assistive equipment use by the student.

___ ___14. Collect information on any behavioral goals and objectives which are being implemented.

___ ___15. Collect information on resources such as vendors and funding options.

___ ___16. Delegate staff to attend IEP staffings or identify an administrative remedy to cover attendance at staffings.

___ ___17. Distribute all relevant information to drivers and transportation associates.

The Driver[7]

All school bus drivers shall be adequately prepared and trained to perform these duties:

Yes No

___ ___ 1. Operate the vehicle in a safe and efficient manner.

___ ___ 2. Conduct thorough pre-and post-trip inspections of the vehicle and special equipment.

---

[7]National Standards. p. 34-35.

Yes	No		
___	___	3.	Ensure the safety, welfare, and orderly conduct of passengers while on the bus.
___	___	4.	Meet the emergency situations in accordance with operating procedures.
___	___	5.	Communicate effectively with school staff, students, parents, law enforcement officials, and the motoring public.
___	___	6.	Complete required reports.
___	___	7.	Complete required training programs successfully.
___	___	8.	Provide maximum safety for passengers during loading and unloading.
___	___	9.	Be familiar with and abide by all rules, policies, and procedures affecting pupil transportation.
___	___	10.	Establish rapport with each building administrator and work to ensure proper conduct and communications.
___	___	11.	Establish proper rapport with pupils.
___	___	12.	Instruct pupils in proper behavior, general procedures and evacuation drills.
___	___	13.	Maintain order as a safety practice and stress the following points and procedures:

a. Minimize interior noise.
b. Control passenger movement.
c. Require orderly entrance and exit.
d. Eliminate movement or potential movement of objects.
e. Require silence at railroad crossings.
f. Prohibit transportation of unauthorized materials.

___	___	14.	Handle minor infractions through seat assignments or discussions with pupil passengers.
___	___	15.	In instances of serious or recurring misconduct, follow school district policy and procedures and submit written reports on appropriate forms to administrators or other persons designated to deal with discipline problems.

Yes No

___ ___16. Be aware that they represent the school system and/or the bus company, and should present a positive image in dress, language, and manner while on duty.

___ ___17. Be familiar with the assigned routes and designated school bus stops.

Transportation Associates[8]

The role and responsibilities of the bus associate or attendant may be dictated by the pupils riding a given bus and may include:

Yes No

___ ___ 1. Assisting with the safe loading and unloading of pupils at their stops.

___ ___ 2. Managing pupils' physical needs during transit.

___ ___ 3. Managing pupils' behavior during transit.

___ ___ 4. Assisting the driver to assure the safety, welfare, and orderly conduct of passengers while on the bus.

___ ___ 5. Assisting in emergency situations in accordance with operating procedures.

___ ___ 6. Communicating with school staff, students, bus drivers, parents, law enforcement officials, and the public.

___ ___ 7. Completing required written reports.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities[9]

The responsibilities of parents include:

Yes No

___ ___ 1. Become familiar with district rules and policies, regulations, and principles of school bus safety.

___ ___ 2. Assist children in understanding safety rules and encourage them to abide by them.

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[8] Ibid.

[9] Students with Special Needs Conference.

Yes	No		
___	___	3.	Recognize their responsibilities for the actions of their children.
___	___	4.	Support safe riding practices and reasonable discipline efforts.
___	___	5.	Teach children proper procedures for safely crossing the highway before boarding and after leaving the bus.
___	___	6.	Support procedures for emergency evacuation, and procedures in emergencies as set up by the school district.
___	___	7.	Respect the rights and privileges of others.
___	___	8.	Communicate safety concerns to school administrators.
___	___	9.	Monitor bus stops if possible.
___	___	10.	Support all efforts to improve school bus safety.
___	___	11.	Identify individuals who have relevant health, educational, and equipment information for their child.
___	___	12.	Provide releases to the School/AEA so information can be collected.
___	___	13.	Answer specific questions when asked by team members.
___	___	14.	Understand relevant rules and regulations, district policies and procedures at a level at which they are comfortable.
___	___	15.	Make themselves available for participation in inservice activities.
___	___	16.	Provide emergency names and numbers.
___	___	17.	Request names and numbers of contacts from school personnel.
___	___	18.	Evaluate options offered by all public and private (including self) transit options.
___	___	19.	Provide information to the team as soon as possible regarding any changes or needs related to transportation.
___	___	20.	Assist future planning and purchases by providing factual, timely information.
___	___	21.	Be sensitive to budgetary restraints, but advocate for the child regardless of these.

THE INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)

An earlier section described the intent of Public Law 94-142 the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (EHA). This section will describe the implementation process for EHA and the Individualized Education Plan. Included in the discussion will be the role and responsibility of the transportation staff in various stages of the implementation process.[1]

A. Identification and Referral of Students for Special Education.

1. A child, suspected of being handicapped, can be referred to a school district for evaluation to determine if the student is eligible for special education by several interested persons, but most frequently, it is a school instructional staff person, parent, or guardian. While not probable, it is possible for a transportation staff member to make a referral if they suspect a child is handicapped.

2. Once a student referral is made, an assessment team is assembled to evaluate the student. As the team gathers information, indications will be evident as to whether the student will qualify for special education, the need for and type of transportation required, and if specialized care is necessary.

B. The Role of Transportation Staff in the Assessment Process

When the assessment team determines that a student may need transportation involving special care, the pupil transportation staff shall be invited to participate in the assessment process as a resource person.

The transportation staff person could be expected to serve two major functions as a member of the assessment team.

1. Primary, would be to educate the assessment team members regarding the transportation environment. This may include the type and configuration of the vehicle that the student would likely be assigned to ride, the probable length and conditions of the ride, special assistive or adaptive equipment, degree of training and skills of the driver, the need for a bus attendant, etc.

2. Secondary, would be to gather information regarding the student's expected needs so as to plan for an efficient, and safe transportation service.

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[1] National Standards for School Buses & Operations, 1990 Revised Edition.

C. Evaluation And Planning Relative to a Student's Special Transportation Needs

Assuming information indicates a need for transportation involving additional care, transportation staff participation on the assessment team can help develop data which could address the following concerns:

1. Can the student be safely transported, given the transportation environment, without undue risk to the student or others?

2. Does the student have medical health, physical or behavioral concerns which would expose the student to unreasonable risk?

3. Can assistive or adaptive equipment deemed necessary for the student during transportation be safely secured and transported, and are there adequate instructions regarding its use?

4. Education and transportation staff may lack the professional expertise and skills to make decisions regarding the above issues. The IEP meeting may include participants who are qualified to assist in determining transportation needs, particularly where significant medical or behavioral concerns are identified. When appropriate, a health care plan for the student should be developed which specifies the type and frequency of care required and skill level of the transportation personnel.

5. Questions regarding appropriate and safe use of assistive or adaptive equipment, can be referred to such persons as physical or occupational therapists, rehabilitation engineers, or equipment vendors for advice.

D. Individualized Education Program (IEP)--Assessment Team

The Assessment Team is the formal group that designs a student's educational plan, establishes goals and objectives, and determines the related services that are necessary for a student to benefit from special education. This plan often serves as the basis for assessment team discussions and decisions regarding a students program content. If it is determined that a student needs transportation involving additional care, transportation staff should be invited to be a participant when making these decisions.

By law, this team of individuals must consider several issues pertaining to the student's educational program. When transportation is considered as a related service, there are a number of questions which must be addressed:

1. Can the student utilize regular transportation?

2. If not, can regular transportation be safely utilized if supplementary staff, equipment, and/or services are provided?

3. If not, what type of specialized transportation is required?

4. Is an attendant or other qualified personnel available?

5. Responsibility of pick-up and delivery of students i.e., are parents or guardians available?

In addition to the considerations listed above, it is often necessary to review various alternative transportation options to meet a student's needs. Some alternatives frequently considered, and which must be allowable when determined appropriate are:

1. Parent or relative providing transportation.

2. Public or private transportation

3. A change of program placement, eliminating the necessity of transportation as a related service.

The Individualized Education Program establishes a written statement of a student's educational rights. Any deviation from conditions in the plan without having re-convened an Assessment Team to change the plan, would most likely be considered a violation of the student's rights. To avoid this, plans should only state the requirement for transportation without spelling out all details of the delivery service. Most often, issues such as make of vehicle, vehicle size, and riding time are not part of a plan and are left to the discretion of the transportation administrator.

While participating on an assessment team, a transportation staff member should be able to challenge transportation requirements that would be impossible to provide (such as maximum riding time of 30 minutes when the student lives 45 minutes from school), appears to be unsafe, or is not understood.

In summary, transportation personnel should be involved in phases of the development of the IEP in accordance with their individual school district's policies and procedures. The following are recommended guidelines for making decisions regarding attendance of transportation personnel at IEP meetings.[2]

1. If a student with disabilities rides the same school bus as nondisabled students to home or school, only under special circumstances should transportation personnel be in attendance (i.e. medical and behavioral problems).

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[2]"Transportation: The Individualized Education Program Process", a paper presented by Linda F. Bluth, Ed.D, Quality Assurance Specialist, Interagency Coordinating Council, Office for Children, Youth and Families, Baltimore Maryland, Paper presented at the National Association for Pupil Transportation Conference and Trade Show, 1991.

2. If a student with disabilities rides a different vehicle, and no other specialized equipment or behavioral management procedures are necessary, transportation personnel should not be required to be in attendance.

3. If a student has severe behavioral problems and transportation is a specific concern, transportation personnel and/or interests should be represented.

4. When any modification to the school bus (equipment) is required, transportation personnel and/or interests should be represented.

5. When a medically fragile student is to be transported, transportation personnel and/or interests should be represented.

6. When a student with an infectious disease is to be transported, transportation personnel and/or interests should be represented.

Dr. Linda Bluth writes that "appropriate decision making regarding the attendance of transportation personnel at the IEP meeting facilitates positive communication and reduces potential costly due process hearing requests."

E. Transportation Plan

The IEP team should develop a transportation plan. There is not always time to address transportation needs during the IEP staffing, especially when the needs might be complex. As a result, the team may elect to have another meeting during which the transportation plan is developed with those individuals most involved in planning and implementing transportation for a specific student. The transportation plan should include:

Mode of transportation to and from school (school bus, van, or parent transport)

Length of time on vehicle each way

Equipment and/or adaptations necessary for transportation

Evacuation procedures

Emergency transportation options

Need for bus assistant

Protocols for on board health care procedures and driver training

Movement in and around the school building

The Bureau of Special Education in the Iowa Department of Education has developed a five-page IEP form that may be used statewide. The use of the form is optional, but it is anticipated that many AEAs and LEAs will choose to use it. Located on page IEP 5a is a section in which the IEP team can designate "Special Education Support and Related Services: Including special education transportation." (A copy of IEP 5a is included at the end of this section.) This area of the IEP form allows the team to specify the transportation services to be provided, the times, duration, and the person responsible for transportation services. Recognizing transportation needs in the IEP is the best way to assure that concerns can be addressed, and that plans developed will be implemented.

Special Needs Transportation Checklist[3]

		Yes	No
1.	When transportation is required as a related service for a student with special needs, is there a transportation representative present or are transportation staff consulted prior to the IEP meeting?	___	___
2.	Is the transportation department informed prior to the start of actual transporting when a special needs student requires additional arrangements due to:		
	a. aggressive or dangerous behavior?	___	___
	b. a technology dependent condition (e.g. tracheostomy tubes, respirator, oxygen, temperature controlled vehicle, etc.)?	___	___
	c. the need for other medical or assistive devices to be present (e.g. wheelchairs, walkers, adapted car seats, etc.)?	___	___
	d. a particularly fragile condition such as osteogenesis imperfecta (brittle bones)?	___	___
	e. a communicable disease or low resistance to communicable disease?	___	___
	f. uncontrolled seizure activity or apnea (cessation of breathing) episodes?	___	___
	g. the need for assistance animal?	___	___
	h. the need for emergency protocol?	___	___
	i. the need for a medical attendant to ride on the bus (e.g., nurse or specially trained attendant)?	___	___
	j. alternative communication system?	___	___
3.	Before special transportation arrangements are recommended, is the transportation staff consulted to insure that they have adequate equipment to transport the student (e.g., a student needs to be transported in a full body cast that does not fit on the existing vehicles, or a temperature controlled vehicle is required)?	___	___
4.	Are the proposed timelines for initiating transportation services realistic?	___	___
5.	When transportation is planned for a student with special needs, is the length of the ride generally realistic, considering specific needs of the student and the amount of time non-disabled students ride the bus?	___	___

[3]Transporting Students with Special Needs: A Resource Manual for School District Administrators. Oregon Department of Education, 700 Pringle Parkway, SE, Salem, Oregon 97310-0290

		Yes	No
6.	When planning transportation for a student with special needs, are alternative plans developed in case the first choice doesn't prove workable (e.g., reimbursing parents for transportation or considering another placement)?	___	___
7.	If a student with special needs requires an adaptive seat during transportation, are the occupational therapist, physical therapist and speech pathologist who work with the student consulted to determine desired positioning, alternative seating, use of augmentative communication devices, etc.)?	___	___
8.	Do special education staff, including therapists, know the requirements and restrictions which govern transportation of special needs students (e.g., which mobility devices provide safe seating for a student during transportation, what materials meet safety standards, when lap trays must be removed, etc.)?	___	___
9.	Are bus attendants placed on the bus when a student with special needs requires more attention or assistance than the driver can safely provide (e.g., continuous or frequent monitoring of respiration or choking, administration of medication, etc.)?	___	___
10.	Does the district assist in providing the necessary bus driver or bus attendant training program, to ensure that transportation personnel are aware of requirements of PL 94-142, PL 101-476, and Section 504, as well as characteristics of disabling conditions, emergency procedures, etc.?	___	___
11.	Does the district provide the transportation department or contracted agent with information needed to maintain a complete transportation data file on each student with special needs which includes: a) information regarding the special care or needs that may impact transportability, b) information on IEP goals and objectives the driver should know, especially behavioral, communication, and motor skills, and c) a record of the parent notification of rights?	___	___
12.	Does the district provide the transportation department or contracted agent with the information necessary to provide emergency data cards for drivers that include any student's special care during transportation?	___	___
13.	Are parents informed of both their rights and responsibilities regarding the transportation of their child?	___	___

		Yes	No
14.	Does the district's transportation department or contracted agent ensure that the bus driver participates in regularly scheduled emergency bus evacuation drills? Are there specific plans on how each student with exceptional transportation needs be handled during emergency evacuation?	___	___
15.	Does the district have a plan for responding to a parental request prohibiting student resuscitation?	____	___
16.	Does the district have a policy on the transporting of assistance animals on school buses or other pupil transporting vehicles (e.g., do you require a veterinarian's immunization certification, certification of training, what will be done if other passengers are allergic)?	___	___
17.	Is there a process in place for resolving disagreements regarding transportation for a given student?	___	___

Student Transportation Plan[4]
Amendment to Individual Education Plan (IEP)

1. Student Name:

2. Driver Name:

3. Maximum length of transportation time (one way):

4. General statement of need:

5. Behavior recommendations:

   Reinforcers for this student:

   Radio
   Praise
   Tokens
   Other

6. Seating Options:

   Specific location
   Seat belts
   Restraints

7. Extra equipment to be transported (list):
   (Include approved securement method for equipment.)

8. (A). Emergency evacuation
   1. Self evacuator
   2. Take in wheelchair ONLY
   3. Blanket evacuation

   (B) Specify emergency evacuation method to be followed:

   (C) Specify aftercare requirements and contacts:
   1. Parents
   2. Doctor
   3. Ambulance

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[4]Transporting Handicapped Students, March 29, 1991, page 3, form from Dr. George Korn.

(D) Medical requirements:
1. Medications which may impact transportation:
2. Oxygen/ventilator dependent:
3. Length of time student may be off oxygen/ventilator in an emergency:
4. Medications needed during emergency:
5. Other medical considerations:

9. Other transportation issues:

Transporter	Position
Special Education Director	Parent/Guardian

Request For Medical Verification of Health Status & Needs[5]

Name:_____Birthdate:_____

Address:_____Phone:_____

Parent/Guardian:_____Phone:_____

Address (If different):_____

Physician:_____

Note to physician: Should you have any questions regarding this request, please contact _____Phone_____

I. Verification of Medical, Health and Behavior Status

A. Briefly describe the current medical, health, and behavioral status.

B. Identify any medical conditions not addressed in "A" above.

C. Identify any health concerns that are not addressed in "A" above.

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[5] Study of Transportation of Medically Fragile Children, Volume One" by Lyle L. Stephens, et.al, 1989.

D. Identify any behavioral concerns that are not addressed above.

E. Identify any communicable diseases that student has or is identified as carrier for.

II. Transportation Services

A. Briefly describe the staff supervision and interventions necessary for the student to be safely transported to and from school given the student's health and medical status.

B. Identify the training required for staff to provide the supervision and interventions addressed in "A" above.

C. Identify any additional restrictions or modifications that would be necessary for student to be safely transported to and from school.

D. Identify any additional special equipment, aids, restraints, or mobility assistance for student to be safely transported to and from school.

III. Participation in the School Day Program.

A. Briefly describe the staff supervision and interventions necessary for the student to safely participate in the normal school day program given the student's health and medical status.

B. Identify the training required for staff to provide the supervision and intervention addressed in "A" above.

C. Identify any additional restrictions or modifications in school activities or medical care that would be necessary for student to safely participate in the school day program.

D. Identify any additional special equipment, aids, restraints, or mobility assistance needed for student to safely participate in the school day program.

Recommendations for Transportation and School Attendance:

_____Based upon the above information and identified procedures, _____ is able to be safely transported to and from and attend school and therefore, transportation and school attendance is recommended.

_____Based upon the above information and procedures, _____is **NOT** able to be safely transported to and from school and, therefore, transportation is not recommended.

_____Based upon the above information and identified procedures, it is recommended that _____ receive school services in the following manner:

_____ _____

Physician signature Date

Please return to:

Approval of Transportation Service Requirements: Each of the following persons has participated in the development of these transportation service requirements and by signing below approves them for implementation.

_____ Dated:_____
Signature of Parent/Guardian

_____ Dated:_____
Signature of School District Representative

_____ Dated:_____
Signature of Transportation Staff Representative

_____ Dated:_____
*Signature of Private Contracted Transporter

_____ Dated:_____
*Signature of School Nurse

_____ Dated:_____
*Signature of Physician

*Appropriate signature under the circumstances.

AUTHORIZATION FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT

If I, as the parent/guardian of the above named student, cannot be contacted in the event of a medical emergency or traumatic injury demanding immediate medical attention, I hereby authorize district staff person or related service provider contracted for by the district to obtain such medical care and treatment for the student.

Dated:_____ _____
Signature of Parent/Guardian

cc: All Transportation Service Providers

Special Needs Transportation Specific Student Questionnaire[6]

		Yes	No
1.	Will Transportation be specified as a related service for this student? If yes, has a transportation representative been asked to participate in the development of the IEP, or contacted prior to the IEP for input?	___	___
2.	Is the student affected by any of the following:		
	a. aggressive or dangerous behavior?	___	___
	b. a technology dependent condition (e.g. tracheostomy tubes, respirator, oxygen, temperature controlled vehicle, etc.)?	___	___
	c. the need for other medical or assistive devices to be present (e.g., wheelchairs, walkers, adapted car seats, etc.)?	___	___
	d. a particularly fragile condition such as osteogenesis imperfecta (brittle bones)?	___	___
	e. a communicable disease or low resistance to communicable disease?	___	___
	f. uncontrolled seizure activity or apnea (cessation of breathing) episodes?	___	___
	g. need for an assistance animal?	___	___
	h. need for an emergency protocol?	___	___
	i. a medical attendant is required to ride on the bus (e.g., nurse or specially trained attendant)?	___	___
	j. augmentative communication system	___	___
	If yes, what is the specific need:_____		
3.	Does the district or its transportation service provider currently have adequate equipment to transport the student and any needed adaptive devices?	___	___
4.	Are the proposed timelines for initiating transportation services for this student realistic?	___	___
5.	How long will the student have to be on the bus (or other vehicle) for the ride? Home to school program_____		
	School/program to home_____		
	a. Are proposed riding times realistic, considering the specific needs of the student?	___	___

[6]Transporting Students with Special Needs: A Resource Manual for School District Administrators, Oregon Department of Education, 700 Pringle Parkway, SE, Salem, Oregon 97310-0290.

		Yes	No
	b. Has student's proposed program been evaluated in the context of required travel time?	___	___
6.	Do alternatives to the proposed transportation exist?	___	___
7.	Does the student require specific assistive devices during transportation (i.e., for positioning, communication, etc.)?	___	___
	If yes, what is required?_____		
	Have the occupational, physical, and speech therapists who work with the student been involved in the design, prescription, adaptation, or utilization of these devices?	___	___
8.	If special devices will be used on the bus, have therapists or other prescribers/designers been made aware of the restrictions and requirements which govern transportation of special needs students (e.g., which mobility devices are safe for a student to be seated in during transportation, what materials meet safety standards, when must lap trays be removed, etc.)?	___	___
9.	Is a bus attendant needed for this student?	___	___
	If yes, why (please explain, e.g., need for frequent monitoring for respiration, choking, or seizure, threat to others, etc.)_____		
	_____		
10.	Does the district's transportation department or contracted provider have the necessary inservice training program dealing with this student's needs currently available locally?	___	___
11.	Is there a complete transportation data file for this student?	___	___
	a. parent or guardian's name(s), address(es), phone number(s);	___	___
	b. pick up and drop off locations and times;	___	___
	c. any additional assistive devices used by the student;	___	___
	d. any assistive devices required for transportation;	___	___
	e. the name of whom to contact regarding the operation of these assistive devices;	___	___
	f. type of specific assistance the driver must provide, if any;	___	___
	g. type of specialized training the driver must receive, if any;	___	___
	h. whether a bus attendant is required;	___	___
	i. target date for the initiation of transportation services;	___	___
	j. clearly defined levels of the student's participation in emergency evacuation drills	___	___

List behaviors, skills, or needs that impact transportation:

_____

_____

_____

		Yes	No
12.	Is there an emergency data card completed for this student?	___	___
13.	Have parents been informed of their role and responsibility in transportation of their child?	___	___
14.	Has the driver assigned for this student participated in regularly scheduled school bus emergency evacuation drills?	___	___

How will this student be evacuated from the bus?_____

_____

_____

15.	Have parents requested that their child not be resuscitated?	___	___
	If yes: Is there a statement signed by parents?	___	___
	Is there a statement signed by physician?	___	___
	Have all other district policy requirements been met?	___	___

If yes: What are transportation staff instructed to do?_____

_____

16.	Is an assistance animal required for this student?	___	___
	If yes: Is there a veterinarian's certification of immunization?	___	___
	Is there a certificate of training?	___	___
	Have families of other students on the bus been contacted regarding allergies?	___	___
	What is the emergency procedure?_____		

_____

17.	Is there any disagreement regarding the transportation of this student?	___	___

If yes: What is the point of disagreement?

Student: _____ Date: _____ [Page____ of____]

Special Education Support and Related Services: (Including special education transportation)

Service (specify)	Amount of Time	Duration from to	Position Responsible

Justification for Instructional Programs and/or Support and Related Services being recommended:

Graduation Notice:

Anticipated date of graduation: _____ _____
[month/year]

Notice provided to student and parents on _____ by _____
[month/year] [individual]

Graduation Criteria attached? ____ Yes ____ No

Information Attached:

Each of the following items must be addressed by either a "yes" or "no." If the response is "yes," then an information page must be completed and attached.

Yes	No	
____	____	Transition Planning Attachment
____	____	Extended Year Special Education
____	____	Shortened School Day (If yes, attach a justification statement)
____	____	Other:

POLICY & PROCEDURE DEVELOPMENT

A number of laws, rules, and regulations dictate the special education services that must be provided to students with disabilities, but few offer directions as to how the services are to be provided. To guarantee uniform and safe delivery of students and provide directions to staff requires that the local school board adopt transportation policy and procedure directives.[1]

Policies and Procedures should be developed and adopted for the following:

1. Control of student medicine transported between home and school on a vehicle
2. Student discipline & suspension
3. Physical intervention and management
4. Authority to use special harnesses, vests, and belts
5. Early closing of school, e.g. conferences, to weather, other emergencies
6. Authority to operate special equipment (driver, attendant, parent, school students, staff, etc.)
7. When no adult is home to receive students
8. When to exclude special out-dated equipment with tears or breaks in the fabric or metal
9. When students are referred for transportation without sufficient information being available to staff to protect their safety.
10. Routing, (riding time, student pick up/drop off location, etc.) should be defined in IEP.
11. Control and management of confidential information
12. Medical emergencies, accidental injury, and when to involve community resources
13. Usage of wheelchairs and mobility aids for pupil seating on school buses when not endorsed by the manufacturer.
14. Eligibility for special transportation services

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[1] National Standards for School Buses & Operations, 1990 Revised Edition

15. Community emergency action plan

16. Emergency procedures, e.g. evacuation, for fire and accidents

The following is a list of operational procedures that should be written for special transportation services. Some of these procedures will relate to accompanying policies listed above. Others will be procedures that do no specifically require policy statements.

- Pre-trip inspections
  - Lift operation
  - Blanket on board
  - Necessary equipment (harness, car seat, etc.)
  - Emergency knife
  - Confidential emergency information
  - Written evacuation plan/seating chart
- Loading/unloading
- Curb to curb, door to door
- Communication link between parents/transportation
- Report writing and record keeping
  - Equipment failure
  - Evidence of child neglect/abuse
  - Incidents on board
  - Behavior problems
  - Seizure activity
- Route management
  - Updating route changes
  - Inclement weather/emergency school closure
  - Procedure for student drop-off
- Post-trip inspection of vehicle
  - Students sleeping on board
  - Medications
  - Assistive devices
  - Other personal belongings

All policies should be in writing, and formally approved by the appropriate educational authority. Procedures should include how policies will be implemented and dates for periodic review and revision.

Note: Transportation directors who have developed written policies and procedures for these areas or others are invited to send copies of those to the Iowa Department of Education's School Transportation Consultant, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa, 50309. By doing this, other districts may use the reports as examples.

TRAINING

The following guidelines are intended to assist in establishing training programs for staff that will enable them to respond to special transportation needs of students with disabilities (which is required by P.L. 94-142) and provide transportation staff with the skills needed to respond to routine and emergency circumstances during transportation.[1]

School Administrators & Education Staff

School administrators and education staff who make program decisions for special education students, including the requirement for transportation as a related service, are frequently unfamiliar with transportation capabilities and limits. These people should be provided information and training in the following areas:

1. When transportation staff should be consulted or included in the assessment team process.

2. The types of vehicles used for special transportation.

3. The types of equipment and occupant securement systems used.

4. A knowledge of state and local transportation policies and procedures, including communications and reporting practices.

5. A general knowledge of the extent of training and skill levels available within the transportation staff.

6. A general knowledge of transportation regulations which could assist in determining if transportation would be appropriate as a related service.

7. A general knowledge of transportation options and distinct capabilities.

8. A general knowledge of current legislative, legal, and administrative decisions.

9. A general knowledge of the application of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) regulations to transportation placements.

With increased responsibility being imposed on special education transportation providers through actions taken by legislative, legal, and administrative authorities, transportation administrators/supervisors must involve themselves in the leadership role to a greater degree than that which is usually necessary for other types of transportation.

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[1] National Standards for School Buses and National Standards for School Bus Operations (1990 Revised Edition)

Transportation Administrator/Supervisor

While the duties and responsibilities of a transportation administrator/supervisor most likely would differ between various transportation providers, there are common areas of knowledge that are necessary to satisfactorily perform the responsibilities of an administrator/supervisor. Some are:

1. Knowledge of federal, state, and local laws and regulations regarding the equipment required on vehicles used for special education students' transportation.

2. Knowledge of federal, state, and local laws and regulations regarding special education staff.

3. Knowledge of such operational regulations as student pick up/drop off, including whether curb to school, or door to school.

4. A general knowledge of special education transportation regulations, such as student riding time and suspension period limitations.

5. A general knowledge of special education students' due process rights and procedures.

6. A general knowledge of the student referral, evaluation, and IEP process.

7. A general knowledge of vehicle staffing requirements, including when an attendant might be needed.

8. A general knowledge of the availability of emergency medical services in the community that could assist if such an emergency were to occur during transportation.

9. A general knowledge of state and local laws relating to child abuse and reporting procedures.

Bus Drivers & Transportation Associates

Drivers and attendants/transportation associates, must operate special equipment, manage student behavior, administer health care according to their qualifications, and serve as a seating specialist.

The responsibilities frequently differ so substantially when transporting students with disabilities that some staff feel more comfortable transporting one category of student. Thus, it is important to fully explain to applicants for special education transportation staff positions the full implications of the duties expected. Staff retention can be increased by carefully screening applicants and eliminating those

who would not feel comfortable performing some required services. Staff retention is critical given the considerable costs associated with the extra training required.

To perform the responsibilities assigned in a safe and effective manner requires a substantial degree of specific training. Some components which would be beneficial to transportation staff are:

1. Introduction to special education, including characteristics of handicapping conditions, the student referral, assessment, IEP process, and protecting confidentiality of student information.

2. Legal issues, including federal and state law, administrative rules, and local policy.

3. Operational policies and procedures, including:

    a. loading/unloading
    b. pick up/drop off (curb to curb/door to door)
    c. evaluation procedures
    d. lifting procedures
    e. student accountability and observation, including evidence of neglect, abuse
    f. post trip vehicle interior inspections for student, medicine, and other articles left prior to parking vehicle
    g. reporting procedures and report writing
    h. record keeping
    i. lines of responsibility relative to role as educational team member
    j. lines of communication, including parents and educational staff
    k. route management, including medical emergencies, no adult at home, inclement weather, field trips
    l. behavior management, including:
        i. techniques for the development of appropriate behavior
        ii. techniques for the management and extinguishing of inappropriate behavior
        iii. techniques and procedures for the response to unacceptable behavior
        iv. procedures for dealing with inappropriate or unacceptable student behavior that creates emergency conditions, or poses a risk to health and safety
        v. procedures for documenting and reporting inappropriate or unacceptable student behavior

There is a wide variety of equipment being identified to accommodate special education students that is required to be a part of the transportation vehicle's environment. It is necessary for the transportation staff to be familiar with the design and operating procedure of this special equipment, as well as the ability to conduct equipment inspection and make simple "field adjustments" during breakdowns. Some examples are:

1. Power lifts or ramps

2. Emergency escape exits, including doors, windows, and roof hatches

3. Special fire suppression systems

4. Power cut off switch

5. Emergency communications system

6. Air conditioning system

7. Mobile seating device, including trays and accessories, securement system hardware, and occupant securement system

8. Adaptive and assistive devices used to support or secure students, mobility aids, special belts, harnessers, and hardware (such as special crutches or braces).

9. Communication systems which may be provided and installed by the body manufacturer, distributor, school district, operator, etc.

As a result of new regulations, that make educational opportunities available to students with disabilities, the staff is finding it necessary to provide both routine and emergency health care to students during the transportation process. Additionally, transportation staff may be exposed to infectious or communicable diseases which could be debilitating, or in extreme circumstances, fatal. Training regarding medical/health issues can reasonably be divided into two categories; precautionary handling, and care and intervention.

All transportation staff should be trained in "universal precautions" relative to the handling and exposure to contagious and communicable disease, including available immunizations. Suggested topics could include:

1. Characteristics of contagious and communicable diseases

2. Disease management techniques

3. Use of protective equipment and devices

Medically fragile, technology dependent, and highly disruptive students require specific care and intervention. Proficiency in basic first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation provides adequate training to care for most health concerns during transportation. For those students who need additional care, intervention, or present specific health risks, a care plan shall be developed during the evaluation process by the assessment team which would specify the following:

1. A brief description of the student's current medical, health, or behavioral status.

2. A description of the medical/health care or intervention necessary during transportation, including the frequency required.

3. A description of who should provide the care or intervention.

4. The type and extent of training skills necessary for the driver and/or attendant.

5. The inspection, operation, use, and care of the students special adaptive/assistive equipment.

6. A description of emergency procedures to be implemented during a medical/health crisis, including communication with medical staff.

7. A description of the procedures to be followed in changing the care plan when conditions indicate a change is warranted.

It is the responsibility of the individual school district to determine the priorities in training material used. The following list [2] includes training that the district might consider as basic. The district should also remember to use consultant resources from the Area Education Agency (AEA), special education nurses, teachers, principals, etc rather than making training the sole responsibility of transportation personnel.

A. Laws, Rules, & Regulations
   - Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-112)
   - Section 504, Education for All Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94-142)
     - Definition of related service
     - Handicapping conditions defined
     - Student Referral, assessment, IEP process
     - Confidentiality of student information
     - Procedural safeguards/due process
   - The Americans With Disabilities Act (P.L. 101:336)
   - Code of Iowa
   - Iowa Administrative Code
   - District implementation of laws, rules and regulations

B. Policies & Procedures
   - Eligibility for special transportation services
   - Confidential medical information
   - Accidental injury
   - Length of ride

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[2] Transporting the Special Needs Student, The Colorado State Pupil Transportation Association, 1991.

Pick up and drop off location
Disciplinary/suspension procedures
Latchkey students
Emergency procedures, evacuations, fires, and accidents
Driver expectations and responsibilities
Position description
Parent/guardian responsibilities
Assignment procedures
Programs served
Medical emergencies, e.g. seizures, chocking

C. Responsibilities
- Driver
- Transportation Associates
- Teachers
- Parents/Guardians

D. Operational Procedures
- Pre-trip inspections
  - Lift operation
  - Blanket on board
  - Necessary equipment (harness, car seat, etc.)
  - Emergency knife
  - Confidential emergency information
  - Written evacuation plan/seating chart
- Loading/unloading
- Curb to curb, door to door
- Communication link between parents/transportation
- Report writing and record keeping
  - Equipment failure
  - Evidence of child neglect/abuse
  - Incidents on board
  - Behavior problems
  - Seizure activity
- Route management
  - Updating route changes
  - Inclement weather/emergency school closure
  - Procedure for student drop-off
- Post-trip inspection of vehicle
  - Students sleeping on board
  - Medications
  - Assistive devices
  - Other personal belongings

E. Student Management Techniques
- Communication techniques, e.g. sign language, direct, non-verbal
- Discipline
- Documenting and reporting inappropriate behavior

Managing advanced disruptive behavior that endangers health/safety
Protecting student dignity
Sensitivity to student needs
Techniques to encourage proper behavior
Techniques to manage and/or discourage unacceptable behavior

F. Medical Conditions and Disabilities
- Arthritis
- Auditory handicap
- Autism
- Behavior disorders
- Cerebral Palsy
- Chronic illness
- Communication disorders
- Down Syndrome
- Emotional disorders
- Guillain-Barre
- Hydrocephaly
- Medical conditions
- Mental retardation
- Microcephaly
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Muscular Dystrophy
- Orthopedic handicaps
- Osteogenesis Imperfecta
- Spina Bifida & Spinal Cord injuries
- Seizure disorders
- Visual handicaps

G. Equipment Use
- Buses
- Lifts and emergency exit ramps
  - Proper operation
  - Proper placement of personnel
  - Proper placement of wheelchair
- Wheelchair/occupant restraint systems
- Belt cutters
- Adaptive/assistive devices
  - Car seats
  - Communication devices
  - Harnesses and hardware
  - Mobility aids
  - Oxygen tanks
  - Respirators
  - Special lap belts
  - Tracheostomy Care
  - Trays and accessories

Types of wheelchairs/mobility devices
Emergency escape exits
Fire suppression systems
Power cut-off switches
Emergency communication system
Air conditioning system
Medical emergency supplies
Troubleshooting and making simple field adjustments

H. Personal Safety
Communicable diseases
Acquired Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)
Guidelines for handling body fluids
Lifting techniques (Red Cross Program)

I. Hands-on Training
e.g. Loading/unloading, lift operation, lifting techniques, using wheelchair and occupant restraint systems, blanket drag, , etc.

J. Performance Testing

Individual Training Plan (ITP) for Drivers

Bus Drivers and transportation associates may be required to transport several students each with several characteristics and needs. In the interest of saving time and providing the specific training needed, it might be advisable to develop an Individualized Training Plan (ITP) for drivers and transportation associates. The ITP provides specific training to drivers and associates relating only to those disabilities and issues related to the students riding their own buses. For example, those who will be transporting students with behavioral disorders may not need to learn how to use wheelchair tie-downs or lifts.

An ITP should include a description of the duties and responsibilities of the driver or transportation associate and the specific types of students they will be transporting. Following this description, a list of the specific training needs should be developed according to the actual duties and responsibilities identified. This list of training needs can then be checked off and dated as the training occurs or as the staff members demonstrate competence in skill areas. As responsibilities and duties change, the ITP can be revised to accommodate the changing training needs of the staff. The ITP can serve as a record of the determination of training needs and documentation that the training was provided.

VEHICLE & EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS

The Minimum Standards for Construction of School Transportation Equipment (Legal Requirements and Regulations) published by the Iowa Department of Education includes a section on the construction of vehicles used to transport special education students. Those construction standards are as follows:

281—44.4(285) Construction of vehicles for children with mobility problems. The following shall apply to vehicles constructed for the transportation of children with mobility problems of such severity that prohibit them from utilizing the regular service door entrance. Vehicles constructed for transporting these children shall meet all federal motor vehicle safety standards relating to school bus construction and Iowa school bus construction requirements as described in rules 281--4.2(285) and 281--44.3(285). The following standards shall also apply:

44.4(1) General requirements.

a. Certification of these vehicles as a multipurpose passenger vehicle due to capacity rating shall not relieve the manufacturer of the responsibility to provide a completed vehicle meeting all federal motor vehicle safety standards for school buses as well as rules 281--44.1 to 281--4.3 relating to the construction of a school bus.

b. Alteration of the interior of the vehicle is permissible if all seats and barriers, component parts, anchorages, wheelchair securement devices, and placement of seats and barriers and wheelchair securement devices comply with federal requirement as of date of manufacture. All equipment must be supplied by the original manufacturer and installed per the original manufacturer's specification. Alteration which would return the vehicle to conventional passenger seating (removal of all wheelchair securement devices) shall include removal of the power lift and rendering the special service door inoperable.

c. Any school bus that is used for the transportation of children who are confined to a wheelchair or other restraining devices which prohibit use of the regular service entrance shall be equipped with a power lift located on the right side of the bus body and forward of the rear wheels. (See paragraph 44.4(2)"g.")

d. The actual rated seating capacity following modification of a vehicle shall he placed at locations indicated in subrule 44.3(17).

e. Ramps are not permitted.

44.4(2) Specific requirements.

a. **Aisle.**

(1) Aisles leading from wheelchair placement(s) to special service door and service door shall at all times be wide enough to permit passage of a wheelchair.

(2) Aisles leading to the emergency door from wheelchair placement(s) shall at all times be of at least 20 inches in width.

b. **Barriers.**

(1) Barriers shall comply with and be installed as required by federal standards as of date of manufacture.

(2) A heavy-duty padded barrier or stanchion shall be provided immediately to the rear of the stepwell opening extending from the side wall of the bus to approximately the aisle to prevent a person from accidentally falling into the stepwell opening from floor level. A barrier or stanchion as mentioned above shall also be placed directly behind the driver.

(3) The power lift mechanism shall be padded and adequately protected to prevent a child from accidentally getting any part of the body caught in the power lift mechanism or special service door at any time.

(4) In the event that an elevator (body floor section serving as lift platform) lift is used, both forward and rear side of platform shall be protected with heavy-duty padded barriers extending from the wall of the body toward the aisle. A covered chain shall be fastened to the rear barrier adjacent to the lift platform, extend across the platform opening, and attach with hook and eye to the forward barrier adjacent to the lift platform.

c **Glazing.** Tinted glazing may be installed in all doors, windows, and windshields.

d. **Heaters**. An additional heater(s) may be installed in the rear portion of the bus on or behind wheel wells.

e. **Identification**. Buses with wheelchair lifts used for transporting physically handicapped children may display universal handicapped symbols symbols located on the front and rear of the vehicle below the windowline. Emblems shall be white on blue, shall not exceed 12 square inches in size, and may be reflectorized.

f. **Power lift.**

(1) Lifting mechanism shall be able to lift minimum payload of 800 pounds.

(2) Power lift shall be located on the right side of the body and in no way be attached to the exterior sides of the bus, but should be confined within the perimeter of the school bus body when not extended. It shall be located forward of the rear wheels of the vehicle.

(3) When the platform is in the fully up position, it shall be locked in position mechanically by means other than a support or lug in the door.

(4) All lift controls shall be portable and conveniently located on the inside of the bus near the top of the special service door opening. Controls shall be easily operable from inside or outside the bus by either a platform standee or person seated in a wheelchair when the lift is in any position. A master cut-off switch shall be located in the driver's compartment. There shall be a means of preventing the lift platform from falling while in operation due to a power failure.

(5) Power lifts shall be equipped so they may be manually raised or lowered in the event of power failure of the power lift mechanism.

(6) The platform shall accommodate a wheelchair which is 30 inches wide. The platform shall be not less than 44 inches long, including guard panels or rails.

(7) The power lift platform shall be covered with skid-resistant material or be designed.to prevent slipping.

(8) The lift platform shall be constructed to permit vision through that portion of the platform covering the window of the special service door when the platform is in the "up" position.

(9) All edges of the platform shall be designed to restrain wheelchair and to prevent operator's feet from being entangled during the raising and lowering process.

(10) Platform shall be fitted on both sides with full width shields which extend above the floorline of the lift platform.

(11) An inward operating safety barrier shall be affixed to the outer edge (curb end) of the platform that will prohibit the wheelchair from rolling off the platform when the lift is in any position other than fully extended to ground level. The barrier shall not be capable of being manually operated.

(12) A self-adjusting, skid-resistant plate shall be installed on the outer edge of the platform to minimize the incline from the lift platform to the ground level. This plate, if so designed, may also suffice as the restraining device described in item 11 above.

(13) The power lift shall be designed so the lift will not operate unless the special service door(s) is opened and the lift platform is in the down or horizontal position.

(14) The lift travel shall allow the lift platform to rest securely on the ground.

(15) A circuit breaker or fuse shall be installed between power source and lift motor if electrical power is used.

(16) When hydraulic pressure is used in the lifting process, the system shall be equipped with adjustable limit switches or bypass valves to prevent excessive pressure from building in the hydraulic system when the platform reaches the full up position or full down position.

(17) All exposed parts of the power lift which are in direct line with the forward or rearward travel of a wheelchair student or attendant shall be padded with energy-absorbing material.

g. **Ramps.** (Not permitted.)

***h.* Regular service entrance.** An additional fold-out or slide-out step may be provided which will provide for the step level to be no more than 6 inches from the ground level to assist persons with handicapping conditions which prohibit use of the standard entrance step. This step, when stored and not in use, shall not impede or in any way block the entrance from normal use.

***i.* Seating and seating arrangements.**

(1) All seat spacing, seats, and related components shall comply with applicable federal standards as of date of manufacture.
(2) All seals shall be forward facing. Side-facing seats are prohibited.
(3) Seat frames may be equipped by the school bus body manufacturer with rings or other devices to which passenger restraint systems may be attached.

***j.* Special light.** Light(s) shall be placed inside the bus to sufficiently illuminate lift area and shall be activated from the door area.

***k.* Special service opening.**

(1) There shall be an enclosed service opening located on the right side (curb side) of the body forward of rear wheels to accommodate a wheelchair lift.
(2) The opening shall be at least 52 inches high and 40 inches wide and with doors open shall be of sufficient width to allow for the installation of various power lifts and related accessories as well as a lifting platform at least 32 inches wide.
(3) The opening shall be positioned far enough to the rear of the regular service door opening to prevent interference of the special service door(s) opening with the regular service doors.
(4) The opening may extend below the floor through the bottom of the body skirt. If an opening is used, reinforcements shall be installed at the front and rear of the floor opening to support the floor and give the same strength as other floor openings.
(5) A drip molding shall be installed above the opening to effectively divert water from the entrance.
(6) Door posts, headers, and all floor sections around this special opening shall be reinforced to provide strength and support equivalent to adjacent side wall and floor construction of an unaltered model.
(7) A header pad at least 3 inches wide, extending the width of special service door, shall be placed above the opening on the inside of the bus.

***l.* Special service door(s)**

(1) A single door may be used if the width of the door opening does not exceed 42 inches. Two doors shall be used where door opening exceeds 42 inches.
(2) All doors shall open outwardly.
(3) All doors shall have positive fastening devices to hold doors in the open position.

(4) All doors shall be equipped with heavy-duty hinges and hinged to the side of the bus.

(5) All doors shall be weather sealed; and on buses with double doors, they shall be of the same size and constructed so a flange on the forward door overlaps the edge of the rear door when closed.

(6) If optional power doors are installed, the design shall permit release of the doors for opening and closing by the attendant from the platform inside the bus.

(7) When manually operated dual doors are provided, the rear door shall have at least a one-point fastening device to the header. The forward-mounted door shall have at least three-point fastening devices. One shall be to the header, one to the floor line of the body, and the other shall be into the rear door. These locking devices shall afford maximum safety when the doors are in the closed position. The door and hinge mechanism shall be of a strength that will provide the same type of use as that of a standard entrance door.

(8) If the door is made of one-piece construction, the door shall be equipped with a slidebar, cam-operated locking device.

(9) Each door shall have installed a safety glass window, set in rubber, and aligned with the lower line of adjacent sash and as nearly as practical to the same size as other bus windows.

(10) Door materials, panels, and structural strength shall be equivalent to the conventional service and emergency doors. Color, rub rail extensions, lettering, and other exterior features shall match adjacent sections of the body.

(11) The door(s) shall be equipped with a device(s) that will actuate a flashing visible signal located in the driver's compartment when door(s) is not securely closed. (Audible signal not permitted .)

***m.* Special student restraining devices.**

(1) Wheelchairs shall be equipped with an appropriate passenger restraint system.

(2) Special restraining devices such as shoulder harnesses, lap belts, and chest restraint systems may be installed to the seats providing that the devices do not require the alteration in any form of the school bus seat, seat cushion, framework, or related seat components. These restraints must be for the sole purpose of restraining handicapped students.

***n.* Wheelchair securement systems.**

(1) Securement systems for wheelchairs shall be those approved by the bureau of school administration and accreditation, Iowa department of education.

(2) All wheelchair securement systems or devices shall be placed in the vehicle so when secured both wheelchair and occupant are facing toward the front of the vehicle. Fastening devices resulting in a side-facing wheelchair and occupant are not permissible.

(3) Wheelchair securement systems or devices shall be provided and attached to the floor of the vehicle with Grade "5" or better bolts and self-locking nuts or lock washers and nuts. The devices must be of the type that require human intervention to unlatch or disengage.

(4) The securement system must be designed to withstand forces up to 2,000 pounds per tiedown leg or clamping mechanism or 4,000 pounds total for each wheelchair, whichever is the lesser of the two.

(5) Straps or seat-belt devices running through the wheels of the wheelchair or around the student seated in the wheelchair for the purpose of securing the wheelchair to the floor are not acceptable.

(6) When wheelchair securement system(s) are located in a school bus so when a wheelchair is not secured in place the device(s) may create a tripping hazard for school bus drivers, passengers, or attendants, the fastening device(s) shall not extend above the floor level more than l/2 inch.

A list of Manufacturers of lifts and mobility device securement systems appears in the "Resources" section of this manual.

ASSISTIVE DEVICES

Assistive Technology includes devices and services that make certain tasks easier for students with disabilities. For example, communication boards and other electronic devices make it easier for some students to communicate. Wheelchairs make it easier for some students to get from place to place while power mobility devices make moving faster and easier for others. Many special education students require a number of assistive devices to allow them to function more independently in areas of communication, dressing, taking care of personal care needs, mobility as well as transportation. For some, assistive devices allow them to survive, as in the case of those who use ventilators, oxygen, or tracheostomies.

In addition to assistive technology, some students with disabilities need services to allow them to be more independent. Such services include the use of buses equipped with a wheelchair lift for transportation, a classroom aide to perform physical tasks, and the use of a personal care attendant to assist with dressing, bathing, household chores, etc.

The devices that assist students in being more independent are used both at home and at school. Such devices tend to be crucial for the student's school activities in that they allow the student to be as functional and as independent as possible. Devices employed at school should also be used at home so that the student has opportunities to practice with them in activities of daily living. The equipment each child needs to have transported should be indicated on the IEP or in a Student Transportation Plan (see the section of this manual on IEP's).

Providing transportation services for students with disabilities requires attention to how assistive devices will be transported between the student's home and the school. There are often questions about whether a wheelchair or power mobility device is appropriate when transporting on a bus. How should communication aids be carried? How should oxygen tanks be secured? What equipment is available to make transportation more efficient?

The following provides you with some information about how to begin to get some answers to some of these questions. Info Tech will assist you in obtaining information from manufacturers, finding used equipment, and provides up-to-date information through the newsletter.

Info Tech is the name of a group of services for people who use or need adaptive equipment. The services offered are: the Assistive Technology Information Network (ATIN), the Used Equipment Referral Service (UERS), and a bimonthly publication, InfoTech Newsletter.

Assistive Technology Information Network

The Assistive Technology Information Network (ATIN) provides free, up-to-date product information on adaptive equipment for people with disabilities.

People with disabilities, family members, and the professional community can use information about availability and cost to select assistive devices to increase independence at home, school, work, and play.

ATIN resources include computerized databases, catalogs, fliers, newsletters, magazines, and other publications.

Through the Network you can get information on assistive devices for specified needs, and the names, addresses, and phone numbers of companies that manufacture specific devices.

You can get information about dealers and vendors in your area that carry commercially available adaptive equipment; offer information on repair, design, modification; and that sell, loan, rent, or offer an exchange service for used equipment. Information regarding organizations or programs that provide financial assistance to purchase adaptive equipment is also available.

The Network can give you information about assistive technology in a wide variety of areas. The ones of most use to transportation providers include those such as: various types of wheelchairs and power mobility devices (PMD's), manufacturers of these items, van and bus lifts, wheelchair securement devices, occupant restraints, car seats, and child safety seats.

Used Equipment Referral Service

InfoTech also offers a Used Equipment Referral Service (UERS). This service is a free, computerized service that matches people who have adaptive equipment to sell with people who wish to buy such equipment. UERS does not list medical equipment, such as ventilators, oxygen tanks, TENS units, etc.

Any person who wishes to locate an item to buy, or wishes to sell an item, can list this information with UERS.

Info Tech Newsletter

The Info Tech Newsletter is a free bimonthly publication. It covers topics relating to assistive technology as well as the Used Equipment Referral Service listing.

All of these services--ATUN, UERS, and the newsletter--are free to people of all ages with disabilities of any type, to their families and friends, and to professionals who work in fields related to disabilities or assistive technology.

You can call **InfoTech** on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at

1-800-331-3027

Or Write:

InfoTech
Iowa Program for Assistive Technology
The University of Iowa
University Hospital School
Iowa City, Iowa 52242-1011

Wheelchair & Power Mobility Manufacturers

If you have questions about the best way to transport wheelchairs and power mobility devices, one of the first steps you might consider is finding out what the manufacturer recommends. There is a list of manufacturers of many of the mobility devices on the market today in the **"Resources"** section of this manual. If you need information about manufacturers not listed, phone Info Tech to assist you.

ROUTING & SCHEDULING[1]

Introduction

The following is based on the publication "Guidelines for Planning School Bus Routes and Scheduling," U.S. Department of Transportation Document FHWA-RD and offered as a guideline to aid school personnel in planning and implementing a safe, efficient and economical school transportation program. The planning process and guiding principles may be applied in meeting any routing or scheduling need. This guideline will not cover vehicular safety features, school bus driver training, purchasing of school buses, or school bus specifications.

The Planning Process

The planning process is divided into the following seven tasks:

1. Determination of Transportation Needs
2. Preparation of School District Map
3. Determination of Hazards
4. Development of Criteria for Routes and Schedules
5. Development of Routes and Schedules
6. Evaluation of Routes & Schedules
7. Modification of Routes and Schedules

To accomplish each of the seven (7) tasks, four (4) steps or subtasks are discussed which will aid the transportation planner in completing each task. These subtasks include:

I. Identifying the objective of the task.
2. Providing information items concerning the task.
3. Listing procedures for accomplishing the task.
4. Providing suggestions for the preparation of a policy statement that reflects the planning accomplished in the task.

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[1]This material is based on the publication "Guidelines for Planning School Bus Routes and Scheduling," U. S. Department of Transportation Document FHWA-RD-75-109, November 1975. The documents, where determined necessary, have been edited to more closely reflect current practices.

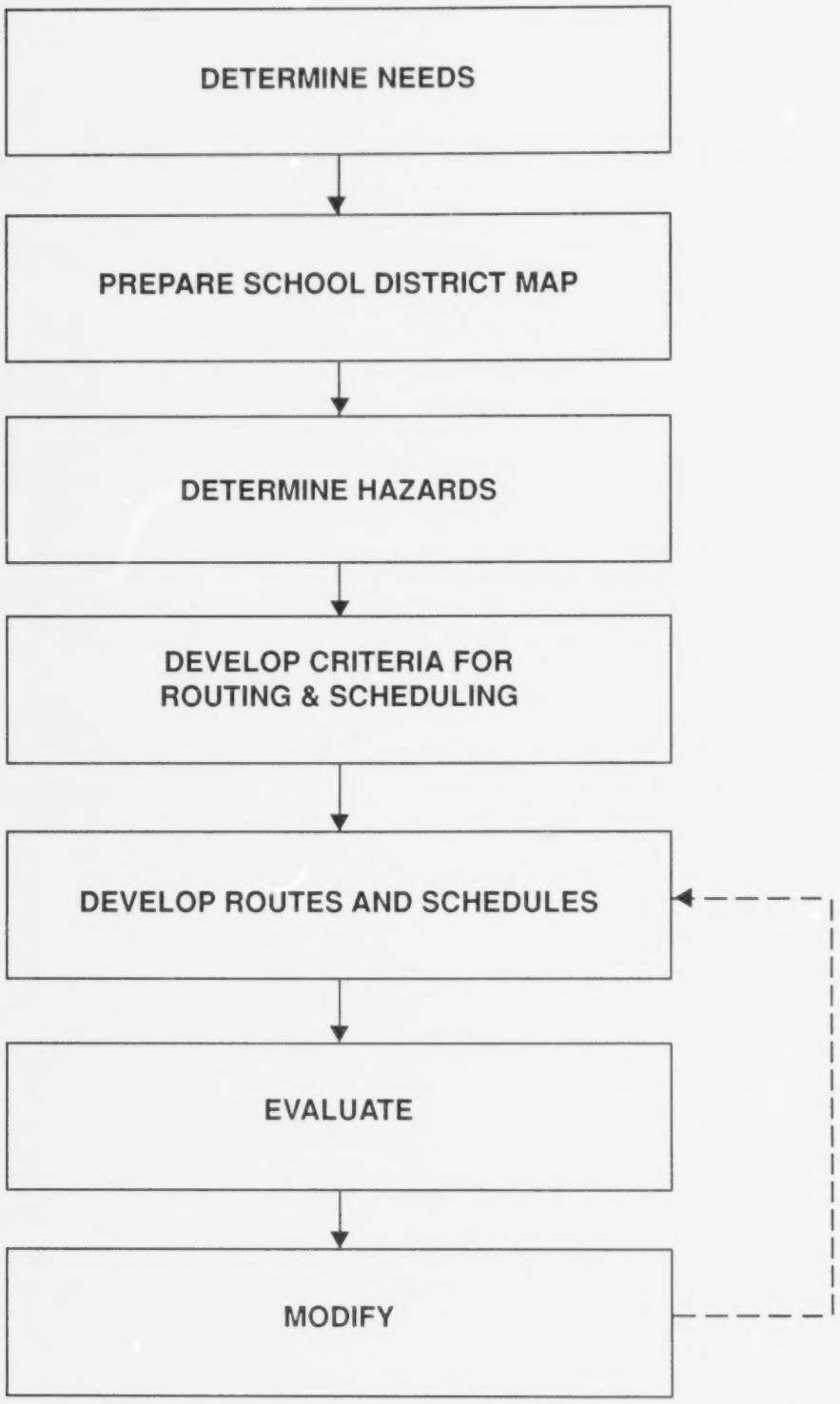

Figure 1. The Process of Planning School Bus Routing and Scheduling

The objective of the task is presented as a specific statement denoting a particular end to be reached or achieved by the task. Information is then given to define or explain technical details related to the task. One or more alternative procedures for accomplishing the task are presented next. Finally, suggestions as to how the transportation planner might prepare school policy statements that best reflect identified school transportation needs and constraints.

Before going further, we offer the following comments relating to the preparation of policy statements for each of the seven tasks.

Policy Statement Preparation

When the tasks of the planning process have been completed, the policy statements generated in each task must be consolidated and formalized. The following suggested procedure was developed by the Education Department of the State of Massachusetts.

Step 1. The administrator and affected staff members may organize an initial draft which contains the task policy statements developed by the planning group. Some basic rules may also be formulated to guide the reviewers in formalizing the policy.

Step 2. The initial draft should be circulated to all interested groups and individuals for review and criticism. The policy should contain a section requiring a periodic review and evaluation by the administrator and the school committee in order that it may reflect the current conditions and the needs of the district (See Tasks 6 & 7).

Step 3. The draft resulting from Step 2 should be prepared and distributed. A meeting should be held to make final adjustments in the draft to be presented to the school committee. Discussions may indicate the need for joint meetings with staff groups or for more work by the preparing groups.

Step 4. Legal counsel should review the final policy statements and they should be voted upon by the school committee.

Step 5. Copies of the school policy should be distributed to the staff, news media, and interested citizens. If the policy has undergone major renovations or is new to the district, then parental distribution may be considered.

Step 6. A meeting should be held with the school department staff to explain the policy.

Policy Statement Considerations

1. Statements should be brief and to the point.
2. Statements should be consistent.

3. Policies should be written by groups of knowledgeable, concerned people.
4. Policies should be reviewed and updated periodically.
5. References concerning laws and applicable regulations should be current.
6. Policies should change with changing educational philosophies.
7. Policy statements should be clearly stated.
8. Policy statements should be understood by all personnel concerned with aspects of the administration of school transportation.

Policy Statement Format

Policy statements may be written in a variety of formats, however, it is recommended that the policy statement contain these items:

1. Index or reference number.
2. Philosophy of transportation policy.
3. Areas of responsibility.
4. Basic administrative practices.
5. Legal references to appropriate laws and rules.
6. Cross references to other policies.

Task 1: Determination of Transportation Needs

Objective

Before any transportation planning can be initiated, it is necessary to determine the extent to which service is needed. The objective of this task is to inventory the number, grade level and location of students requiring the transportation service and assess the type and extent of any special transportation needs. This will form a basis for the transportation plan.

Transportation Needs Survey

It is assumed that most school districts will have readily available the information needed by the transportation planner to determine the district's transportation needs. However, if not, a transportation needs survey may be helpful in accomplishing this task. Below are items which are typically included in such a survey.

1. ***Location of pupil residences***. This usually consists of a street address in urban areas. However, should include rural route number, township, section number and location within section for rural residence locations.

2. ***School of attendance (building).*** Determine each student's designated school of attendance. This information will be necessary to determine transportation service needs to each site, student transportation service eligibility, and for calculating student riding times.

3. ***Distance from student residence to assigned building of attendance***. Necessary to determine transportation eligibility, riding time and vehicle needs.

4. ***Attendance center boundary lines.*** This information is readily available from the district and will be helpful in determining transportation eligibility and vehicle needs within a given attendance or service area.

5. ***Grade levels of students.*** The grade level of a student will affect a child's eligibility for transportation service and riding time allowance (See Chapter 43.1, Iowa Administrative Code). It will also be helpful in determining vehicle loads and ultimately the number of vehicles required to accomplish the transportation service.

6. ***Condition and type of roadways in the district.*** The transportation system must operate on roads that are safe. Knowing the general terrain of a district along with its roadway hazards makeup and condition can assist in the routing of vehicles to affect maximum operational safety and economy.

7. ***Traffic or walking hazards.*** This may include identifying specific rush hour traffic patterns, the effect of inclement weather conditions on transportation services, high accident or crime locations, or other undesirable walking areas for students. In some areas, such hazards may result in the adoption of district policy providing transportation services to students who would normally walk to school. By identifying these areas it may be possible to initiate local action plans to solve or eliminate these problems. Such plans might include construction of sidewalks, stepped up law enforcement activity, or the addition of traffic control devices or adult crossing attendants.

8. ***Parent, community and board of education attitudes or commitments to transportation services.*** Quite often community sentiment has resulted in the adoption of board policy directing the provision of transportation services to specific students, groups of students or areas of the district which under normal circumstances would not be provided such service. Unsafe walking areas, high traffic volume, lack of sidewalks, etc. may have affected these decisions. This information must be considered when formulating a routing plan.

9. ***Student health factors.*** This information is needed to determine the extent of special transportation needs. This information may be obtained from school medical records or lists may be prepared by the principals, the school nurse or by the parents of the students.

10. ***Present and potential school transportation funding sources.*** Examine current and projected budget trends and allocations. Consider alternative sources of income including charging a fee for non-required transportation services, tax levies, grants or borrowing potential.

11. ***Estimate the number of routes required.*** This can be approximated by totaling the number of students to be transported and dividing the number of students by the average number of seats per bus in the fleet. For example: 1000 eligible students / 60 seats per bus = 16.7 routes. Remember, this is only a rough estimate and the exact number of routes will be determined in Task 5.

12. ***Consider transportation service options including private contracting and parent reimbursement.***

Other Sources of Information.

There are several information channels open to the transportation planner. In addition to school personnel, city, county and state governmental agencies can assist with census, roadway and other information you may need to determine the district's transportation needs. Much of this information may be available from these sources via computer generated print-out

Materials needed by the transportation planner may include a survey form, an accurate and detailed map of the school district of a scale not less than 1 mile to the inch or larger, and a method of storing, sorting and retrieving gathered data.

Procedures for Obtaining the Information Required to Determine Transportation Needs.

Step 1. Decide what information is needed and from what source(s) it will be obtained.

Step 2. Create assignments or a work plan for collecting the necessary data. The schedule should include the information gathering techniques to be utilized, the time allowed to obtain the information, and the deadline for finding the necessary data.

Step 3. Obtain the required information and record the data for retrieval and processing.

Policy Statement

The policy statement should provide a framework for the type of information necessary to determine the transportation needs of the district. A means of collecting this information should also be suggested in the policy statement.

Task 2: Preparation of School District Map

Objective

The single most important tool utilized in transportation planning is an adequate map of the school district. The objective of preparing the map should be to display pictorially the information obtained in the transportation needs survey for use later in the route planning and scheduling process. The map will be used to plot residences, bus stops, route hazards, attendance boundaries and attendance center locations.

Map Requirements

1. The map should be current (brought up to date, not necessarily new).

2. The map must be to scale.

3. The scale should be of sufficient size, not less than 1 inch to the mile and larger if possible.Two inches to the mile seems to be most popular.

4. The map must indicate all major manmade and natural physical features, including those that are anticipated in the near future.

5. All roads should be clearly identified by surface type.
6. District boundaries and school boundaries should be delineated on the map. It may be necessary to obtain neighboring school district maps if shared transportation services or programs between districts are required or anticipated.

7. The map must provide easily identifiable residence locations. Numbered dots on the map representing households or building sites or names of residents have been used in the past.

Procedures

Step 1. Obtain the map. Maps may be secured from the following agencies:

a. Local or county planning agencies.

b. Bureau of Highway Planning.

c. County engineering departments.

d. State Highway Department.

e. Map Information Office, United States Geological Survey, Washington D.C.

f. Commercial map suppliers.

Step 2. Enlarge the map to the desired scale if necessary. If the map when obtained was not of a desired scale the following sources should be available for enlarging services.

a. Blueprint companies.

b. Highway departments.

c. Printing firms.

Step 3. Add the following information to the map:

a. School district and attendance center boundaries.

b. School locations.

c. Residences and grade or program level of students at each residence. It is much easier, and time efficient, for the route planner if the number of students, their grade level and attendance center can all be determined from looking at the map. There are two popular methods of accomplishing this:

Colored Pins

Colored pin heads can be used to indicate the number, grade level and/or program level of students at each stop. Disadvantages of this method include: 1) pins can become accidently displaced or removed from the map, 2) pin holes tend to destroy maps over time which can be expensive to replace, and 3) when there are several students (represented by pins) at a stop the map can become cluttered and difficult to read.

Colored Pens/Pencils

Another method uses colored pens or pencils to indicate the number, grade level and attendance center related to each student pick up point. For example one might consider using a red pen to represent high school students (grades 9-12), green pen to represent middle school students (grades 6-8) and blue pen to represent elementary students (grades K-5). If at a stop there were one high school student, one middle school student and 3 elementary students you would enter on the map a number 1 in

red, a number 1 in green and a number 3 in blue at the pick-up site location on the map. Students attending special education programs can be identified by circling the colored number presenting the student.

d. Housing developments, trailer courts or other locations from which large concentrations of students may be transported.

e. Existing construction, bridge or roadway embargoes or other impediments to the transportation service.

Step 4. Obtain other materials that will be used by the transportation planner during route development.

Task 3: Determination of Hazards

Objective

Safety is said to be a judgmental phenomenon. However, there are certain elements or trouble areas which seem common to situations many school transportation people consider hazardous. Since the safety of our children is of the utmost priority in transportation planning, one must consider many elements of areas, streets or highways within and over which children must walk or travel on their route to school.

Before one can actually route a bus or establish bus stops or even establish a comprehensive school policy, it is important that one be aware of existing hazards as well as potential hazards which may develop as the school year progresses.

The objective of this task is to identify and record potential pedestrian and vehicle hazards which pose a threat to school age pedestrians, school bus passengers and school vehicles.

Typical Hazards (Rural Areas)

1. Roadbed make up and /or design.
2. Inadequate, unobstructed visibility at pick-up sights (See 321.372, The Code)
3. Speed limits.
4. Road and bridge embargoes.
5. Dangerous intersections due to visibility obstructions caused by crop or other vegetation.
6. Roadway maintenance history or construction.
7. Slow moving/fast moving vehicle areas..
8. Safe and adequate turn-around sites.
9. Railroad crossings and railway schedules.
10. Routine visibility problems in low-lying areas due to fog.

Typical Hazards (Urban)

1. Construction sites where vehicles may be delayed by workers or student pedestrians may be exposed to hazards on their way to the bus stop.
2. Traffic volume on streets and at intersections which pose serious walking hazards.
3. Inadequate or unsafe pedestrian street crossing locations. Inadequate gaps in traffic due to improper timing of street lights can endanger pedestrian crossing by not permitting enough time for students to cross streets between traffic light changes.
4. Excessive speed limits at or along student pedestrian traffic areas.
5. Inadequate or nonexisting sidewalks along student pedestrian routes.
6. Unsafe vehicle overpasses and underpasses.
7. Areas of routine poor visibility due to adverse weather conditions.
8. Snow removal schedules by city, county or state agencies.
9. High crime or criminal activity areas.
10. Railroad crossings and railway schedules.

Typical Considerations

1. Every child will not be entitled to district transportation services, however, every child is expected to receive instruction in pedestrian safety measures whether the walk is to and from the bus stop or to and from the school building. (See Iowa Administrative Code, Chapter 43.40)

2. Whenever possible school bus routes should be designed to take advantage of right-side or residence-side pick ups to avoid street or highway cross-overs by students.

3. Sidewalks or curbs along student pedestrian routes are preferred so that children may walk on a path separated from traffic lanes.

4. The absence of sidewalks or buffer strips between sidewalks and traffic, or where right-side or residence-side pick ups by the school bus are not feasible, may not constitute traffic hazards in all situations and locations.

5. Seek the cooperation and input of state, county and local police agencies in the determination and resolution of traffic and pedestrian safety hazards.

6. Snow on sidewalks is generally not considered sufficient cause for providing transportation unless the area being serviced is regularly snow covered. When snow causes conditions which are considered generally unsafe, school may be cancelled or the starting time delayed until it is safe for both vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

7. Crossing guards to assist students across streets are generally less costly for a district than the provision of school transportation services.

8. Secondary students are generally considered capable of crossing all controlled intersections safely unless, due to a student's physical or mental disability, this would pose a threat to their safety.

9. Children should be encouraged not to walk across private property en route to or from school.

Procedure

Step 1. Study or survey the school district for hazards. Personally observe, interview police, traffic engineers, developers, parents, students, bus drivers, or anyone else who is knowledgeable about local hazards. The information gathered in Task 2 should provide most of the information required.

Step 2. Plot all hazards on the map prepared in Task 2 and make written notes for your files.

Task Policy Statement

The policy statement for this task should include a list of identified hazards within the district as well as the procedures or processes which will be followed to cope with them.

Task 4: Development of Criteria for Routes and Schedules

Objective

The objective of this task is to establish criteria which will guide the school transportation planner in developing safe routes and efficient schedules.

Procedures

Step 1. Establish eligibility requirements for transportation service. The district must determine to whom it will provide transportation service. Generally this is based on two factors:

a. Statutes. The Iowa Code (Section 285.1, subparagraph 1) establishes minimum distances from school beyond which students are legally entitled to free school transportation services or compensation. In Iowa, elementary students living more than two (2) miles and high school students living more than three (3) miles from their schools of attendance must be provided transportation services. (High school is considered grades 9-12 or 10-12 as determined by

Note: Transportation when provided as a related service to students with disabilities must be provided regardless of where the child lives when the service is specified in the child's Individual Education Program.

b. Board Policy. School districts may, for reasons related to safety or a matter of policy, elect to transport students living less than the 2 and 3 mile statutory distances if they so choose, however, are given statutory authority in these cases to charge a fee for such discretionary transportation services. The fee, per child, for discretionary transportation service cannot exceed the district's average cost per pupil transported.

Step 2: Establish maximum student riding time limitations. Rules adopted and set out in the Iowa Administrative Code (See IAC Section 43.1, subparagraph 3) establishes (one-way) maximum student riding time limitations from a student's residence to the student's school of attendance as:

1. 60 minutes elementary

2. 75 minutes high school

These limits may be waived by the parent. Route planners should strive to keep riding times as low as possible within economic and transportation availability restraints.

Step 3: Establish maximum distances at which students may be required to walk or meet a transportation route. Iowa Code (Section 285.1, subparagraph 2) establishes the maximum distance that a student may be required to walk or be brought to meet a school transportation route. That distance is three-fourths (3/4) of a mile.

Note: In cases involving a student with a disability whose Individual Education Program requires that transportation be provided, the service specified may be curb to curb in which case a walking distance policy or statute would not apply.

Step 4: Consider distances between school bus stops. Iowa Code (Section 321.372) mandates that there be given at least 300 feet of amber flashing pre-warning lamp prior to any school bus stopping on the traveled portion of the roadway. Although the intent and purpose of such statute was to avoid unnecessary traffic tie-ups and the creation of impatient drivers eager to pass the stopped bus, it effectively restricts the placement of school bus stops to no closer together than 300 feet.

Step 5: Establish guidelines or limitations for the number of students to be picked up at a single stop.

The larger the school bus rider population per bus stop, the higher the likelihood of clowning around, property damage, and danger to the students at the stop. Some areas set this limit at 10 to 20 students per stop with exceptions for staging or shuttle areas when none of the above mentioned hazards exist. In areas where the bus stop is situated in an ideal location, e.g., a location where serious vandalism cannot occur, where traffic is scarce, where the bus stop visibility is well over 200 feet, and where virtually no other hazards exist, the maximum may be either increased or removed. Depending on the district or type of area to be serviced, the number of hazards in the district, etc., this step may not be necessary.

Step 6: Set earliest and latest arrival and departure times for a.m. and p.m. route schedules.

The arrival time should be agreed upon by the transportation and school administrators in order that teachers or supervisory staff are ready at the school when the buses discharge students. The dismissal time limit should be set in order to minimize student exposure to traffic around the building including teacher, student and parent vehicle traffic.

Task Policy Statement

The policy statement should include the maximum walking distance, a maximum time in transit, a minimum distance between bus stop locations, a maximum number of students using each bus stop, and all other requirements regarding times, distances and number of students transported.

Task 5: Development of Routes and Schedules

Objective

The objective of this task is to develop workable routes and schedules which are safe, efficient, and assist the district in meeting its educational goals and objectives.

Type of Routes

School officials responsible for routing and scheduling should be familiar with the various route types currently in use. These route types may be used individually or in combination, depending on local conditions. It must be understood, however, that a routing plan must be developed for the safety of all but only for the benefit and convenience of the majority. There will always be those who are not completely satisfied with the routing plan. The routing planner can only hope to establish routes which are as safe and efficient as possible within established statutory and district policy guidelines.

1. Circle or Loop Route -- This is a main route which circumscribes an area by using different roadways to complete a round trip. The circle or loop route has the advantage of equalizing, to some degree, the time which students spend on the bus. This will occur when the bus travels in the same direction on each trip so that the first child on in the

morning is the first child off at night. It is best suited for areas where, due to student density, the bus can fill out its load within a relatively small area and within a short time period. This is important because when using the circle or loop route, student riding time begins with the boarding of the first student passenger.

The major disadvantage of this route type is longer riding time exposure for the first students on the bus who travel away from their destination half of the time. Some districts try to remedy this situation by reversing the route at mid-year. This posses a safety concern as local motorists expect to see school buses at certain locations at specific times within the district. Changing or redirecting the route at mid-year disrupts this routine and may create a potential accident producing situation.

2. Spoke Route -- This is a main route which extends from the school to some terminal point in the district. Generally, the bus travels over a direct route to the farthest pick-up point of the route before beginning to take on students. On this type of route, children travel more or less directly toward the school, whereas on a circular route, the first children to board the bus may be transported via an indirect route.

   The major disadvantage of this route type is that it can seem unfair to those living at the extremities as those living farthest from school are generally picked up first and are left off the bus last at night. Rationale for this includes:

   a. Those living farthest from school can, in most cases, expect to ride the school bus longer than those living closer to school. To require a student living closer to school to ride the bus longer for the sole purpose of equalizing riding time is not valid for reasons stated in b. and c. below.

   b. From a safety standpoint, it is desirable to have the least number of pupils on board when the bus is farthest from school and emergency assistance. Many times if a school bus is going to experience mechanical difficulties, it occurs during the first few miles of operation. On a spoke route, this would probably occur as the bus is enroute to its first student pick-up or within the first few stops. On the other hand, if a problem developed with the vehicle later in the route, the bus would normally be closer to school and/or emergency assistance.

   c. Last, the efficiency of a vehicle's operation depends on several factors; tow of which are weight of the load and the distance that the load must be carried. As a vehicle's load is increased, the more energy (fuel) it is going to take to start the load moving from a stop, keep it moving along the route, and repeat this cycle many times. Traveling empty (without passengers) to

the extremity of the route before taking on passengers, in theory, places the heaviest loads on the vehicle for the shortest period of time.

The spoke route is frequently used in rural areas where drivers begin their routes from their homes rather than from a central garage or bus storage facility. This eliminates the need to return the bus to that facility after the last route of the day. There are disadvantages related with not having the vehicles returned to a central location. From a maintenance standpoint it is more desirable and convenient for district maintenance personnel to perform routine supervision and preventive maintenance inspections when vehicles while stationed at the maintenance facility.

During extreme weather periods, having the vehicles at the maintenance site can give the maintenance staff an opportunity to make sure vehicles are operational. If jump-starting or other maintenance attention is needed, the vehicle is situated where mechanics have ready access to the necessary tools, equipment, and parts.

As an alternative, where several drivers live in the same general area, rather than taking their buses home following the morning route, the school may provide an automobile in which all drivers are returned to their homes or businesses. This may be more economical than having every driver drive their (less efficient) buses home and makes the school buses available for preventative maintenance and service during the day.

3. Trunk or Feeder Routes -- This is a route which provides for cars or small buses to collect children on minor roads in sparsely settled areas and bring them to main roads to meet a regular school bus route. This type of route may be beneficial where the population is sparse and distance between students is great. The location on the main road to which a feeder route brings children to meet a regular school bus route is called a transfer point. Transfer points can be set up at homes, or any other location where a safe off-road site is available.

   Trunk and feeder routing is usually more complex than other routing types. Therefore, it is quite important the the regular buses routed along transfer points operate according to accurate schedules.

   The use of a feeder route may be advisable for one or more of the following reasons:

   a. To limit the use of large buses to improved roads.

   b. To reduce travel time on the main route.

c. To accommodate or access students with disabilities which cannot safely, timely or economically be accessed by regular route.

4. Shuttle Route -- This is a route which extends between two or more school buildings. These routes may also be used for transporting pupils between districts where a whole-grade sharing agreement has been established or within districts operating schools in two or more buildings in different locations or cities.

Route Service

When planning routes, there are two service methods used; single-trip and multiple-trip. The route service plan adopted has an important effect upon the number of drivers required, as well as upon the quality of the service.

1. Single Trip -- This involves a morning and afternoon trip by one bus on each route. This service is typically used in rural, more sparsely populated areas. It meets the needs of schools where instructional programs require both elementary and secondary students to arrive at their respective schools at the same time. This type of service is also more expensive per pupil transported as each route is covered only once, and each bus serves only one route. If this type of service seems practical for a majority of your routes, then synchronizing school hours for the elementary and secondary schools is strongly advised. If the hours are staggered such that high school students begin school at 8:00 a.m., junior high students at 8:30 a.m., and elementary school students at 9:00 a.m., then a multiple-trip routing plan may prove to be a more practical, economical, and efficient service.

2. Multiple Trip -- This plan calls for each bus to cover two or more different routes in the morning and in the afternoon. This plan is suited to districts of a relatively dense population where distances are not of particular concern. If multiple routes are established to service single student grade or category levels (elementary, middle school or high school), staggering beginning and dismissal times for each grade or category will be necessary to allow adequate time for routes to be completed and avoid excessive student waiting time at attendance centers.

   The multiple trip plan is usually the most economical means of service which may be provided since it requires the minimum number of buses as well as the minimum number of drivers.

   Economics in route service can be realized by utilizing the multiple trip plan. This method can reduce the number of buses and drivers required by as much as 50 percent. Any reduction in the number of buses and drivers represents substantial savings in fixed charges and other transportation costs. In some cases, where routes are necessarily

long, a driver might make a long run and then a short run. In some districts where there is an abundance of long and short runs, it is advisable to have some buses making three or four short runs and others making one extremely long run. A regular review and adjustment of the service plan is essential for a safe and efficient service, however, the educational program must not be neglected in the process. This is simple a matter of effective coordination between the transportation director and the educational administrator. Staggered hours may, for example, be agreed upon without causing any harm to the educational programmer to the length of the school day.

The multiple trip plan requires fewer drivers but will probably require drivers to work longer hours; possible making the drivers more than part-time employees. These additional hours may result in more attractive salaries which could facilitate the recruitment and retention for qualified drivers.

Bus Stops

Bus stops should be located at points where pupils can be loaded and unloaded safely and conveniently. Safety considerations in designating bus stops include:

1. Visibility -- (See Iowa Code, Section 321.372, subparagraph 1) Every school bus stop must provide for at least 300 feet of unobstructed vision of the school bus by motorists approaching the bus from either direction.

2. Property Damage -- Property owners sometimes become upset with the placement of school bus stops. When selecting urban or suburban bus stops consideration must be given to the property owner(s) at or near the stop site. The bus stop should be located away from wooden fences, shrubs and other private property to prevent damage by students waiting to be picked up. Sometimes, property owner complaints may be reduced by locating stops in front of the houses of people with children using the bus stops. The number of students per stop designation should also be considered. Generally not more than 10-20 students per stop is advised.

   In rural areas districts must be aware of possible damage caused by the school bus itself to roadways, driveways or other private property at or near the bus stop. When turn-arounds are located at a stop utilizing a private entrance to a residence the route planner should examine the location for inadequate vehicle maneuvering space and other hazards that may be struck during the turn-around maneuver.

3. Traffic Volume- Traffic volume in areas where stops are to be placed should be considered. In urban areas bus stops should not be located on heavily traveled streets. In areas where school districts have adopted the policy of not establishing pupil stops on heavily traveled

thoroughfares, some other method of loading and discharging students must be utilized. For example, the bus may turn off the main thoroughfare at certain intervals and load or discharge pupils at stops on side streets or roads that parallel the main roadway. Where possible, it is safer to utilize side streets for loading and discharging students rather than arterials. Recent traffic counts should be available from state and local traffic engineering departments, and can be utilized in determining the traffic volume of a particular street.

In rural areas, traffic volume is an important factor in establishing school bus stops and stop locations but is something that a district can do little about other than be extra cautious. Being sure statutory visibility distances at the stop are available, trying to schedule right-side pick-ups and deliveries and making sure drivers and student passengers are properly instructed in safe loading and unloading procedures will help to deal with the traffic volume factor.

4. Walking Distance to Bus Stops -- In urban or suburban areas consideration should be given to student walking routes to and from the school bus stop. When establishing bus stops, consider how the students are to get to them. Will students have to cross over or pass through heavily traveled roads, high crime areas, roads with high speed limits, high volume intersections and uncontrolled intersections? Every effort should be made to have students cross as few streets as possible. Pupils should be instructed in the safest routes to follow between their homes and the bus stop. The assistance of traffic engineering personnel should be solicited in developing safe walking routes. Where unavoidable obstacles or dangers exist, the district should make every effort to have them eliminated or the student should be picked up at a location nearer to his residence.

5. Additional Hazards -- Avoid locating bus stops near hazards such as steep hills, dangerous approaches to intersections, railroad crossings, narrow bridges, sharp curves, crowns of hills, and obstructions to visibility. In most cases, using a parallel street, staging area, or another route may aid in avoiding such hazards. Identify those areas where fog is prevalent.

6. Spacing of Bus Stops -- Where pupils live at considerable distances from each other, the bus will generally be required to stop at each student residence rather than at central gathering points. Stops must be established to allow a minimum of 300 feet of distance between each stop to allow for the statutory operation of the school bus warning lamp system (See Iowa Code, Section 321.372). Where pupils live close together they may be required to walk to meet the bus up to three-fourths of a mile (See Iowa Code, Section 285.1, subparagraph 2).

Reducing the number of stops made to load and unload students will generally decrease route time, and, therefore, can save the district a

considerable expense over time. It may also, however, create a new problem of making an unsafe walking situation for the student.

7. Staging Areas -- These are gathering places where large populations of students are to be picked up. Staging areas are generally located at high school, elementary or intermediate schools which are not in use at the time the students are awaiting their buses. Staging areas work well in places where the schools are in close proximity to one another. Staging areas can only be designated where the students can safely and conveniently walk to the area. The practice of eliminating unnecessary bus stops by establishing single pick-up staging areas cuts travel time and expense and is, therefore, recommended where practical.

8. Parental Selection -- In order to avoid parental complaints at a later date, some states or school districts have instituted parental bus stop selection. The transportation planners follow the same procedures as they would in assigning and locating sites for bus stops. They number each bus stop and send a copy of the route and the bus top locations to the parents of the children to be transported. The parents are able to choose between two or three bus stops which their child is eligible to use. The parents and their children have the option of selecting the child's walking route to the bus stop as well as selecting which bus stop the student will use.

Regulations and Recommendations for Loading and Unloading Students:

*There must be at least 300 feet of unobstructed visibility in front and to the rear of the bus during loading and unloading procedures. Adequate warning must be given to the motoring public through statutory warning lamp and stop arm use. (See Iowa Code, Section 321.372)

*Since continuous supervision of bus students is a responsibility of school authorities, buses should not arrive before the school building is open and supervisory staff are on duty.

*Children should remain seated until the driver opens the bus door. Hazards from other vehicles can be avoided by discharging pupils on the school building or student residence-side at loading or unloading sites.

*Loading and unloading should be orderly, without pushing or shoving.

*Students should not be permitted to run in loading or unloading areas or crowd onto the bus steps.

*Utilizing staff members or safety patrols to supervise the children when loading and unloading is recommended.

*Enroute loading and unloading should take place only at designated stops.

*All students must utilize their designated bus stop.

*It is the schools responsibility to have each student leave the bus at the designated stop nearest the student's house. Each driver should be supplied with a list showing the names, addresses, and bus stop number or street address of each student being transported. A map or diagram of each route should also accompany each bus.

*Drivers of buses which arrive at school early should move their buses out of the loading areas in order that buses arriving later will have sufficient space to unload.

*Some schools assign a loading position to each bus serving that school. In this situation, the driver should make every effort to be in the correct position on time.

*Eliminate overcrowding and congestion by checking and updating student assignments to buses.

*Ensure that every child boards the proper bus. Two techniques may be applied to achieve this. One method is to assign a number to each bus and have the number readily displayed on the bus. The other is to issue a name tag to the very young children during the first few weeks of school each year. On the name tag will be the student's name and bus number and the tag is worn on the clothing of the student for teachers and drivers to see and assist the student in getting on the correct vehicle.

*Eliminate unnecessary waiting.

*The driver must be aware of each and every unloaded student's presence before moving forward to the next stop.

*All pupils shall be received or discharged from the right front entrance door of every school bus and if required to cross the street or highway to their home must cross in front of the bus, look in both directions and proceed to cross the roadway only upon signal from the bus driver. (See Iowa Code, Section 321.372, subparagraph 2)

*A motorist may attempt to pass the bus during the loading and unloading procedure. Drivers should be alert to this potential occurrence and if possible report such violations as per statute. (See Iowa Code, Section 321.372A)

*The driver must be particularly attentive and cautious in inclement weather.

Many schools protect younger students and avoid congestion by staggering the dismissal schedule; for example, kindergarten through grade three are dismissed at 3:20 p.m., grades four through eight are dismissed at 3:25 p.m., and grades nine through twelve at 3:35 p.m. It is also advisable for elementary teachers to

supervise their students from their classrooms to the loading area and to ensure that the students board the proper buses.

The protection of pupils from vehicular traffic is of utmost importance during school bus loading and unloading periods. Whether located within the school grounds or along a side street or highway, the loading area must be protected. Adequate supervision by driver or school staff will benefit the students and add greatly to their safety. The utilization of school bus safety patrols is strongly recommended.

All vehicle traffic should be prohibited from moving into or from loading and unloading areas during the times students are boarding or disembarking. (See Iowa Administrative Code, 43.42.) Restricted parking signs, portable signs, gates, barriers and even the buses themselves have been used by schools to prevent the movement of traffic into and out of loading and unloading areas.

Task 6: Evaluation of Routes & Schedules

Objective

The objective of this evaluation is to assess the ways in which the standards of transportation service have been met and to reveal the areas of school transportation service where improvement may be warranted.

Procedure

The evaluation has been constructed in such a manner that each statement which produces a *no* answer indicates an aspect of the transportation program which needs improvement in order that the system realizes its full potential. A majority of the statements in this evaluation were taken from the School Bus Management Handbook compiled by New York State. The steps are as follows:

Step 1. Answer each statement with a check mark indicating either "yes" or "no."

Step 2. For each "no" answer, go to the above task specified and read the section covering that information.

Step 3. Take the proper action to remedy the situation in order to improve your transportation plan.

Routing and scheduling principles to be taken into consideration in an evaluation of any school transportation program should include:

1. Safety is regarded as a primary objective in pupil transportation (refer to Tasks 3 & 5).

2. Standards of service are adequate in terms of the needs and ability of the local district, including required service to nonpublic schools (refer to Task 1).

3. Policies and regulations are clearly stated and are readily available to those interested in them (refer to Introduction).

4. The policy governing walking distances is clearly defined and consistently applied (refer to Task 4).

5. Routes do not include any unnecessary mileage (refer to Task 5).

6. Routes are planned to keep hazards to a minimum (refer to Tasks 3 & 5)

7. The transportation needs of disabled students have been met (refer to Task 5, Special Considerations).

8. Bus schedules are planned to meet the needs of the instructional program (refer to Task 5).

9. Seats are provided for all pupils (refer to Task 5).

10. Buses are operated on schedule insofar as possible (refer to Task 5).

11. Supervision is provided for children at loading and unloading sites (Task 5).

12. The loading of buses at the close of the day is carefully planned and well supervised (refer to Task 5).

13. In the planning of special trips, adequate consideration is given to safety and supervision (refer to Task 5).

14. A means is provided whereby pupils may contribute to the planning and/or operation of the transportation system (refer to Task 5, Safety Patrols).

15. Appropriate use is made of the various media for communication (refer to Task 5, Policy Statement Procedures).

16. Parents always have reason to feel that their communication relative to transportation problems are welcomed by school officials (refer top Task 1).

17. Efforts are made to secure a constructive attitude on the part of parents with regard to pupil transportation problems (refer to Task 1).

18. Pupils are adequately instructed as to what constitutes good behavior on buses.

19. Insurance is adequate with respect to both limits and types of coverage (refer to Exhibit A, page 44).

20. School bus safety patrols, when utilized, are properly trained and policies adopted (refer to Task 5).

21. Routes are planned to eliminate trips of over 45-60 minutes riding time (refer to Tasks 4 and 5).

22. Drivers are encouraged to report route hazards.

23. Safety instructions by teachers include attention to transportation safety.

24. School personnel accept their responsibility for cooperating in the enforcement of the school bus passing law (refer to Task 5).

25. Emergency school bus evacuation drills are carefully planned and executed so as to realize the full benefits of such drills.

26. Emergency drills are conducted by drivers and supervised by authorized school personnel or law enforcement personnel.

27. Safety rules for pupils are understood and enforced.

28. There is a local program of recognizing drivers and students for exceptional service or safety efforts.

29. School officials make use of local, state, and county law enforcement departments which cooperate in the safety effort.

30. Routing turn-arounds are at a minimum.

31. All routes are evaluated at least once a year.

32. All routes are pretested via bus trial run before students ride them (refer to Task 5).

33. All drivers follow precise bus routes and stop only at designated stops (refer to Task 5).

34. Emergency (alternate) routes or adverse weather routing plans have been established (refer to Task 5).

35. Bus stops are not located on steep grades, on curves, or at busily traveled intersections (see Task 5).

36. Bus stops are located such that students using them must cross a minimum number of streets to get to them.

37. Size and number of buses are adequate to meet safety standards.

38. Spare buses are available.

39. Drivers can secure help with problems when needed.

40. Students are not required to walk by construction sites, on streets with high traffic volumes and high speed limits, etc. (refer to Task 5).

Task Policy Statement

The task policy statement should list all the evaluation statements deemed necessary by those persons creating the school policy. It is vital that the evaluation written in the policy statement be comprehensive and include statements which clearly relate the considerations and steps which are required for safe transportation practices.

Task 7: Modification of Routes & Schedules

Objective

The objective of modifying routes and schedules is to establish procedures which may be followed in order to make existing bus routes safer, more efficient, and more effective. This objective includes the addition of new routes where necessary.

Procedure

Bus routes should be reviewed continuously, especially in transient areas where new developments are opening and people are constantly moving. The routes should be reviewed for:

1. Changes in the number of students requiring transportation.
2. Changes made in regulations or policy.
3. Road construction and street improvements.
4. The addition of median strips to streets.
5. Changes in the number of buses available.
6. The addition of crossing guards or safety devices on some streets.
7. Changes in road conditions.
8. Political reasons.
9. Property owner requests.
10. Parental concerns.
11. Driver concerns.

Input for the review may come from the drivers who are on the routes daily or from parental complaints. In most cases, when there is reason to believe that the existing route(s) are not operating at their optimal levels, then an on-site route investigation may be warranted.

Step 1. Review driver trip sheets, parental complaints, physical layout of the bus routes on the map discussed in Tasks 2 & 3.

Step 2. Decide the extent of modification necessary. Task 6 will be helpful.

Step 3. Reorganize the entire system or modify the existing route(s) following the tasks and steps applicable to the situation as described in this guide.

Procedures for Handling Parental Complaints

Step 1. The district's safety officer and the supervisor or coordinator of transportation should receive and review the complaint.

Step 2. Each must conduct an on-site investigation of the problem.

Step 3. Each must make a recommendation.

Step 4. The recommendation should be given to the superintendent for final decision.

Step 5. Action must be taken to remedy the situation if a problem does exist.

Step 6. Results of action taken or the reasons for no action should be made known.

Bus Route Extensions

Once bus routes have been established, they should not be altered or extended except by persons given this authority specifically by the Board of Education.

Removal of Bus Service

When, because of hazards, bus transportation has been provided for pupils whose walking distance is less than that authorized by school policy and, subsequently, the hazards are eliminated or conditions change so that the pupils may walk safely to and from school, the removal of bus service may be warranted.

In some cases where new subdivisions open during the school year and the number of students requiring new service is greater than the existing routes and buses can accommodate safely, the addition of new buses and new routes may be required. In cases of this type, the procedures for determining routes discussed throughout these guidelines should be followed.

COMMUNICATION & RELATIONSHIPS

Safe, efficient special transportation services require open communication and positive relationships between all involved. Each group of individuals involved in planning appropriate programs for special needs students must be committed to maintaining a good relationship with one another and effectively communicating in a direct, efficient manner.

The Transportation Supervisor & Special Education Director

Transportation is often the last department to be involved in placing a special needs student in a particular school or program. This often happens in the form of a request for immediate transportation after all the decisions have been made. The importance of being considered "part of the team" cannot be stressed enough. The Transportation Supervisor should take the initiative--set a meeting between transportation and the head of special education (as a minimum-it doesn't hurt to start at the top). Both parties have the same concerns and the same goal. What needs to be established are the game rules and lines for communicating. Prior to setting the meeting, the Transportation Supervisor should make sure what s/he wants and be prepared to back up his/her request. Here are some suggestions for items one may want to clarify:

1. Involvement of transportation personnel in the staffings on students. This may be impractical if you have a large number of special needs students, but necessary for those with particular needs. By being involved from the beginning, you can avoid surprises like finding out the child is in a wheelchair, or has a life-threatening disability. Being involved in the staffing ensures that the child's specific transportation needs are in the IEP. It also means that the parents cannot demand something different at a later date.

2. Procedures for requesting special transportation services. Establish a procedure for requesting transportation, forms to be used (if any), who generates the request, who processes it in the transportation department and the turn-around time needed to provide service.

3. Transportation Associates. Determine a procedure for the use of transportation associates (also called aides) on buses. How is a need determined, who requests and pays for them, and what kind of training is needed?

4. Emergency information about passengers. The driver and transportation associate are direct service providers and as such need to have emergency information about their passengers. If the bus is involved in an accident or the driver is incapacitated, emergency response personnel will need information about passenger disabilities. This information is probably best obtained through the school since they should already have emergency cards. In addition, the teacher or principal may have some pertinent information to add about a child's behavior. If a child has a seizure on the bus, both the school and parents will need to know, so decide how the driver is to report this.

5. Procedure for Student Drop-Off. A driver may find him/herself faced with the situation where no one is at home to receive the student when the bus arrives for drop-off. A written procedure should be developed to deal with this situation. Such a procedure should be written with input from the special education staff and with legal advice.

Effective Communication

Effective communication will make the difference in the efficiency of special transportation services. Effective communication is direct and positive to the extent that it promotes parental support, information from teachers, nurses and therapists, and helps promote a positive view of the transportation services by the community as a whole.

Each individual involved in the planning of a student's education program is responsible for communicating effectively. Those responsible for communication include: the drivers, transportation associates, teachers, students, parents, the school district office personnel, the transportation supervisor, mechanics and the general public.

School bus drivers are the most visible representatives of the school district providing services to the community. The degree of success and community support for a school's programs can be affected by the demeanor of the school bus drivers and their ability to provide a safe, dependable, and courteous service. Providing such service requires each driver to communicate clearly and effectively with everyone involved, including other drivers.

Communication with Parents/Guardians

Parents of handicapped children have varying outlooks on life. Some are aware that they have an "imperfect" child, some deny there is a handicap, some want their children treated with kid gloves. Most, fortunately, have come to terms with their situation and are willing to work with the transportation department.

Drivers and para-professionals usually have contact with the parents and school personnel every day, so they provide a daily link between home and school. It is up to them to initiate and nurture open communication and a sense of trust so all are comfortable with the bus ride.

Parents of children with disabilities hear many negative comments from a variety of sources from the time that their child is diagnosed as having a problem. It is easy to appreciate how these parents might feel if all they hear is how their child is different or doesn't fit in. This does not mean that drivers should ignore problems. However, it will promote and strengthen positive relationships with parents if the driver can also tell them when their child has done well or had a good day. If the parents have heard positive comments about their child's behavior, they will be

more likely to accept negative comments when necessary and will probably be more cooperative in assisting the driver in dealing with those. Cultivating a positive relationship with parents is one of the best things a driver can do to assure an appropriate ride for the child.

Some would suggest that a home visit prior to or within a week of adding a new student to the route facilitates effective communication between the school and the parents. Some purposes for such home visits might include:

1. Allowing the parent to describe the unique needs/problems of their child.
2. Allowing the driver to describe school district policy & procedures.
3. Allowing the driver to explain special circumstances of the route or vehicle equipment.
4. Allowing the parent to give the driver information about how to make their child's ride positive.
5. Allowing the driver to receive first hand knowledge about the child which might otherwise be withheld.
6. Allowing the driver and parents to develop an understanding of each other's concerns.
7. Allowing parents and drivers to establish open, positive communication.

Communication with Students

As the old saying goes: "Actions speak louder than words." The actions and manner in which the driver interacts with students reflects the driver's attitudes toward students. Students will generally react accordingly. Drivers should strive to be pleasant, polite and courteous to students while also providing the firm guidance they need to understand the rules and limits for their behavior while on the bus. Actions that let students know that they are valued include: listening to what they have to say, assisting with mobility problems, preferential seating for those who don't see as well, showing interest in the student's day, etc.

Always listen to student complaints and act upon those appropriately when warranted. Consistent complaints about the same thing must be reported to the transportation office for remedial action. Students with behavior or emotional problems may present unique and difficult situations for the driver. These should be discussed with teachers and parents who can help the driver determine the best methods for dealing with these.

Dr. Linda Bluth[1] relates characteristics and behaviors of drivers to which students respond favorably. Students react positively with drivers who:

- always know what is going on (the driver who acts confused makes the student confused)

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[1]"The Learning Disabled Child: Insight and Strategies for the School Bus Driver" by Dr. Linda Bluth, an unpublished paper.

- talks to "me" and "listens" to "me."
- treats me like an individual
- is easygoing.
- sees that there is more than one way, not just his or her way.
- can take a joke.
- is fair
- "puts himself in my place."
- is the gentle driver.

Students react negatively to the driver who:

- is always expressing his/her opinion. Students are easily influenced. One should say "In my opinion. . .. "
- "wants me to be perfect." ("I am trying and s/he can't see it.")
- has favorites.
- "can't organize us." The driver who "can't make us stop being bad."
- doesn't listen.
- swears.
- hits.
- "blames me for something I didn't do."

Communication with Teachers

Teachers, therapists, nurses, psychologists and teacher aides who work with the student can provide drivers with assistance in meeting the special needs of the student. The most effective drivers will take time to occasionally talk with these staff members. A positive relationship between the driver and these staff will improve the communication and strengthen the driver's ability to meet the individual needs of students. The driver should inform their immediate supervisor of any communication that takes place with other school staff.

When there is a problem with a child, the educational staff working with the child can provide important timely assistance. Conversely, drivers aware of problems in the classroom may be able to reinforce teacher's efforts while the child is on the bus and provide the teachers with feedback that will be useful in further programming for the child.

Communication with the General Public

The effective special education bus driver refrains from making negative comments about particular students or groups of students, school personnel, parents, administrators, etc. The effective driver will recognize that his/her behavior reflects on him/her self, other drivers and the school district. If the driver feels negatively about some aspect of his/her job, s/he should discuss this with a supervisor or some other administrator rather than discussing it in public places.[2]

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[2]The Effective Driver of Handicapped Students, Dr. George & Joyce A Korn, 1990.

Drivers also must respect the rights and dignity of the parents and students with whom they come into contact during the course of performing their job duties. Many drivers become familiar with parents and may be taken into the confidence of the parents. The driver must respect this confidence and not discuss the information with anyone who does not have a significant need to know. The best rule of thumb for drivers is to treat parent or student information in the same manner you would want to be treated if the roles were reversed.

Communication with Mechanics

"Drivers and mechanics traditionally feel that the other does not understand or appreciate the difficulty of their particular trade."[3] The transportation supervisor can help break that cycle by communicating the standards for vehicle safety and establishing channels for communication. It is sometimes desirable to have the driver and the mechanic meet to discuss problems in order to assist with the diagnosis of the mechanical problem(s) in a particular vehicle. Positive communication of vehicle problems will assist in implementing the repair correctly and efficiently the first time.

Parental Rights in Special Education

Parents of a child who is receiving special education have certain rights which are safeguarded by federal and state law. It is helpful for transportation staff to be aware of these rights in order that they are respected and preserved while planning for special education students and during interactions with parents.The rights of parents are listed below under eight headings.

Records

Parents have the right to:

1. look at and review their child's educational records without unnecessary delay and in no case more than 45 days after they have asked.

2. ask for an explanation of anything in the records.

3. have copies made at a reasonable cost which does not include a fee for searching or retrieving the information.

4. be informed of the types and locations of records being collected or used by the agency.

5. ask for a change in any record if they believe it is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of their child's privacy rights.

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[3]Ibid. p. 32.

6. ask for a records hearing if the agency does not make the requested change within a reasonable time.

7. be informed in writing of the agency's decision regarding amending their child's record after a records hearing,

8. attach a statement or set forth any reasons for disagreeing with the agency if the agency does not amend their child's record after a records hearing.

9. be informed that their statement will be kept with their child's record as long as the record is kept by the agency and that the contested portion of the record and attached statement will be disclosed if released to any other party.

10. be informed that the agency keeps a record of persons obtaining access to their child's record including the name of the persons, the date access was given, and the purpose of the review.

11. be informed that if any educational record includes information on more than one child, they have the right to look at information only relating to their child.

12. be informed that the agency may presume that a parent has authority to look at records relating to his her child unless the agency has been told that the parent does not have authority under state law.

13. give or withhold consent to disclose their child's records, except for authorized personnel.

14. be told to whom information has been given.

15. be informed before information in their child's file is to be destroyed.

16. have the records that are scheduled to be destroyed.

Consent

Parents have the right to:

1. give consent before an initial evaluation is conducted and before placement is first made in special education.

2. withhold or revoke consent up until the time the proposed action takes place. In the absence of consent, the agency has the right to proceed to a hearing to determine if their child should be initially evaluated or placed. If a dispute arises after their child is placed in special education, they may ask for a hearing to review the decision.

3. be informed that their consent cannot be required as a condition of any benefit to them or their child, except for initial evaluation and placement.

Notice

Parents have the right to:

1. receive notice a reasonable time before the agency (a) begins or (b) changes or (c) refuses to begin or change the identification, evaluation, placement of their child, or provision of a free appropriate education.

2. have the notice in writing, in their native language or other principal mode of communication, and at a level understandable to the general public. If the notice is translated orally or by other means, the agency must keep written documentation that the parent understands what the notice says.

3. have the notice describe the proposed action, explain why it is proposed, describe the options considered and explain why other options were rejected.

4. have a description of any other relevant factors considered by the agency.

5. be notified of each evaluation procedure, test, record, or report the agency will use as a basis for any proposed action.

6. have the notice state all procedural safeguards available to them.

Evaluation Procedures

Parents have the right to:

1. have a full and individual evaluation of their child's educational needs.

2. have more than one criterion used in determining an appropriate educational program for their child.

3. have the evaluation performed by an multidisciplinary team.

4. have their child assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability.

5. have a re-evaluation every three years or more often if conditions warrant or if they or their child's teacher requests it.

Independent Evaluation

Parents have the right to:

1. be notified where their child can get an independent evaluation at no cost or little cost.

2. have the independent evaluation considered when placement and program decisions are made.

3. be advised of the procedures for obtaining an independent evaluation at public cost and the conditions under which such an evaluation may be obtained.

4. have an independent educational evaluation at public cost if the agency's evaluation is determined to be inappropriate, or if requested by an administrative law judge at a hearing.

5. have independent evaluation results presented as evidence at a hearing.

6. have the same criteria and qualifications of independent examiners as are used by the public agency when it initiates an evaluation.

Least Restrictive Environment

Parents have the right to:

1. have their child educated with non-handicapped children to the maximum extent appropriate to their child.

2. have their child remain in the regular educational environment unless supplemental aids and services have been determined to be unsatisfactory.

3. have a range of alternative placements available so their child's educational program is changed only to the extent necessary.

4. have their child go to the same school he or she would go to if non-handicapped unless the individualized education program (IEP) requires some other arrangement.

5. have their child participate with non-handicapped children in non-academic and extracurricular services and activities such as recess, physical education, counseling, clubs, athletics, and special interest groups to the extent appropriate to their child.

Hearings[4]

Parents have the right to:

1. ask for an impartial due process hearing to question the agency's identification, evaluation or placement of their child, or to question the agency's provision of a free appropriate public education.

2. have a hearing set at a reasonably convenient time.

3. be informed of available free or low-cost legal and other relevant assistance.

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[4]In Iowa, to request a hearing, a notorized request clearly and concisely stating the issues must be sent to the Director, Department of Education.

4. have the hearing chaired by an unbiased administrative law judge.

5. be informed that the Department of Education keeps a list of administrative law judges and that the Department pays them for their services.

6. be informed that they may be accompanied at a hearing by counsel and individuals with special knowledge or training in problems of the handicapped.

7. have their child present.

8. have the hearing open or closed to the public.

9. present evidence and confront, cross examine and compel the attendance of witnesses.

10. prohibit any evidence from being presented at the hearing that has not been disclosed at least five days before the hearing.

11. have a copy of a tape recording of the hearing upon request.

12. have a hearing decision from an independent administrative law judge, who is not an employee of a public agency involved in the education of their child.

13. obtain written findings of fact and a written decision within 45 days after the Department of Education gets the initial request for the hearing, unless an extension has been granted by the administrative law judge.

14. appeal, to court, a decision from the administrative law judge.

15. have their child remain in his or her present educational placement while the administrative proceedings are pending, unless they and the agency agree otherwise.

16. have their child admitted into public school until the completion of all proceedings, if the complaint involves admission to the public schools.

17. be advised that the court may award reasonable attorney fees to parents or guardians of handicapped children in certain circumstances.

Requesting a Special Education Hearing

Differences of opinion regarding the appropriateness of an agency's evaluation or placement of a child in special education should not be ignored. Every attempt should be made to resolve these differences as soon as they arise. Educators and parents should discuss concerns openly and informally, and clarify the intent of educational laws before seeking a ruling from the state.

A hearing can be requested by the child involved, or on behalf of the child by his or her parent or guardian, or by the school district.

Questions or Concerns

The U.S. Office of Education has designated a state-level person to handle parents questions about laws and rules, to investigate concerns and to assist in initiating the appeal process. This person may be contacted for information.

DeeAnn Wilson, Consultant
Special Education Administrative Services
Bureau of Special Education
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146
(515) 281-5766

Initiating a Hearing

Filing a request for a hearing is not a difficult process and an attorney is not required. A person filing a request may have legal or other assistance if desired. The request for the hearing must:

a. be a written statement,
b. clearly state the issues,
c. be signed by a notary public, and,
d. be sent to: Director of the Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146

Once the request is received by the Department of Education (DE), the local school board secretary will be asked to send a copy of the child's records to DE. A hearing date and location convenient to all parties is then set. The parties receive a detailed description of the procedures to be used in the hearing. They also are invited to participate in a voluntary mediation conference prior to the hearing.

The Mediation Conference

A unique aspect of special education hearings, the mediation conference, is an informal meeting conducted by two members assigned by DE's Bureau of Special Education. It is designed to give the parties involved an opportunity to discuss the matter informally with state officials and to resolve the issues if possible.

After receiving the request for the hearing, the Bureau of Special Education contacts the parents, school district superintendent and AEA Director of Special Education to invite them to participate in a mediation conference. This process is voluntary. If the issues are resolved by mediation through a discussion of

responsibilities, the special education laws and rules, or through compromise, the person who originally sought the hearing may request that the hearing be dismissed. A dismissal does not affect that person;'s right to file another request for a hearing later. The mediation conference does not result in an official ruling from the state, but instead encourages informal resolution of the issues.

If the issues cannot be resolved informally, or if either of the parties does not wish to participate in the mediation conference, the hearing is held as scheduled. The hearing results in a written decision from the administrative law judge. The mediation conference and the hearing are separate and distinct procedures.

The Hearing

The hearing is chaired by an independent administrative law judge, who is not an employee of the Iowa Department of Education or the public agency involved in the education of the child. The hearing results in a decision which is final unless a party brings a civil action. The parent decides whether the hearing is open or closed to the public. There are three types of hearings:

1. a hearing based on stipulated record wherein the issues are decided based upon the record, written briefs or arguments.

2. An evidentiary hearing in which witnesses are called and cross-examined under oath.

3. A combination of 1 and 2.

A hearing is recorded on tape, which may be copied for the parents or school district if desired.

The administrative law judge makes a written decision after considering evidence and arguments presented.

DISABILITIES & MEDICAL CONDITIONS

To be considered a person with a disability under P.L. 94:142, a student must have certain characteristics which adversely affect educational performance, and need special education and related services. There are eleven categories. They are:

1. **"Deaf"** means a hearing impairment which is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, which adversely affects education.

2. **"Deaf-blind"** means concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational problems that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for deaf or blind children.

3. **"Hard of hearing"** means a hearing impairment, whether permanent or fluctuating, which adversely affects a child's educational performance, but which is not included under the definition of "deaf" in this section.

4. **"Mentally retarded"** means significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, which adversely affects a child's educational performance.

5. **"Multihandicapped"** means concomitant impairments (such as mentally retarded-blind, mentally retarded-orthopedically impaired, etc.) the combination of which causes severe educational problems that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blind children.

6. **"Orthopedically impaired"** means a severe orthopedic impairment which adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly (e.g., clubfoot, absence of some member, etc.) impairments caused by disease such as poliomeylitis, bone tuberculosis, etc. and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns which cause contractures).

7. **"Other health impaired"** means:

   a. having an autistic condition which is manifested by severe communication and other developmental and educational problems; or

b. having limited strength, vitality or alertness due to chronic or acute health problems such as a heart condition, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever, nephritis, asthma, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, epilepsy, lead poisoning, leukemia, or diabetes, which adversely affects a child's educational performance.

8. **"Seriously emotionally disturbed"** is defined as follows:

a. The term means a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree, which adversely affects educational performance:

1. An inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors;

2. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers;

3. Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances;

4. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or

5. A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

b. The term includes children who are schizophrenic. The term does not include children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they are seriously emotionally disturbed.

9. **"Specific learning disability"** means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain in jury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor handicaps, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage.

10. **"Speech impaired"** means a communication disorder such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment, which adversely affects a child's educational performance.

11. **"Visually handicapped"** means a visual impairment which, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partially seeing and blind children.

The following description of some disabilities provide minimal information about the condition, some of the associated assistive devices and special concerns relevant to those providing transportation services for special needs students.[1]

Note: The following descriptions of some disabilities and medical conditions are presented to provide a brief overview of the condition and some special concerns relevant to transportation. In all instances, it would be wise to speak with the special education nurse or the school nurse to discuss individual students and to learn about individual needs and any precautions or procedures that should be followed with each particular student.

Arthritis (Juvenile)

Painful inflamed joints. Very still and slow moving. Poor posture due to developed deformities.

Equipment: Crutches, helmets, wheelchairs, power scooters, reachers.

Special Concerns:

1. Poor balance. stiffness and pain make it difficult to move fast enough to catch themselves if they fall.
2. Slow movements, often afraid to move because of pain.
3. Because of fluctuations in disease, may be in wheelchair one day, walking the next, and back in the wheelchair on the third.
4. May have fluctuations from one time of the day to the other. Some are more flexible and move easier toward the end of the day rather than in the morning.
5. Don't pull on limbs. Ask the student how to best help them if they need assistance.

Auditory (Hearing) Problems

May vary from total loss to slight loss of hearing. Person may have speech and language difficulties if hearing loss occurred as an infant.

Assistive Devices: Hearing Aids

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[1] Transporting the Special Needs Student, Colorado State Pupil Transportation Association, 1991.

Special Concerns:

1. A person might be able to partially hear what is being said, but has problems interpreting it. Take time when giving instructions.

2. If the person is profoundly deaf, he/she may not understand anything that is said. Use basic gestures, facial expressions and hand motions. Continue giving instructions until the direction is understood and accomplished.

3. Try not to let the passenger "get away with things" because of his or her handicap. For example, a student may have partial hearing, but will pretend not to understand directions.

4. If all else fails, write out instructions.

Autism

Autism is a severe developmental disability which appears during the first three years of life and which is behaviorally defined to include disturbances in the rate of appearance and sequencing of developmental milestones, abnormal responses to sensations, delayed or absent speech and language while specific thinking capabilities may be present, and abnormal ways of relating to people and things.

Equipment: Usually none.

Special Concerns:

1. Difficulty mixing with others.

2. Unstable mood changes often occur. Crying, giggling, laughing, etc. may be unexplainable.

3. May have no fear of real dangers, yet might be extremely upset by any change in routine, bus seating, etc.

4. Inappropriate attachment to objects, sometimes obsessive, going to any means to get what they want.

5. Tendency to put anything into their mouths.

6. May have violent reactions to certain situations. Be aware of situations which may disturb the student and plan for them.

7. Do not like physical touching or gestures of affection.

8. Repetitive movements, hand flapping, rocking and head banging are common.

9. Generally these students do not communicate verbally.

10. Share information about the student's behavior with teachers and parents.

11. Because of their unpredictable behavior, these students should never be left alone unless you've been told differently. They may inflict injuries upon themselves or cause injury to others.

12. Regardless of the incident, remain calm. These students will react adversely to your overreaction.

Cerebral Palsy (CP)

Caused by brain damage occurring before, during, or after birth which results in loss of control of voluntary muscle movements. . Three basic types: athetoid, ataxic, and spastic. Varying degrees and combinations of CP are found with possible seizure problems. CP may affect one half of the body, one side of the body. It may range from mild to severe in nature Some students with CP are also mentally retarded but many are not. Some students with CP will have associated communication problems and some may have seizures.

Athetoid CP: Usually these students are loose, floppy, or disjointed looking with excessive, uncontrolled movements. Balance is poor and they may have tremors in hands or legs. May be walking, or need a walker or wheelchair. Often delightful,. very friendly and intelligent. May have trouble speaking clearly.

Ataxic CP: Much like the athetoid. Have poor coordination and a disturbed sense of balance and depth perception. They may walk with their legs far apart and their arms out for balance.

Spastic CP: Stiff, tight and slow moving. They cannot respond quickly, so give them enough time to follow directions. Often afraid of moving and have poor balance. If in a wheelchair, they might sit stiff and extended, falling to one side. If walking, may walk with stiff, crossed legs or up on toes.

Equipment: Some students with CP will have a number of assistive devices. Others will not use any. Some assistive devices used may include, wheelchairs, power mobility devices (chairs, scooters), special straps and seat belts for posture control in wheelchairs, crutches, leg or ankle braces of all kinds, walkers of all kinds, language boards, electronic communication devices, head pointers, hand splints.

Special Concerns:

1. Balance, either walking or sitting may be poor. May fall to one side when sitting.

2. Slow response both physically and verbally.

3. Speech may be slurred and hard to understand.

4. Tremors of the foot may cause it to jump off foot pedal of wheelchair. Gently, slowly lift back onto pedal.

5. May fear sudden movement, or fast movement for which they are not prepared.

6. Fast movement or loud noises may make them "jump" or "startle" making them stiffer or floppier than usual. It is a good idea to use a quiet, slow and gentle approach with these students and let them know ahead of time what you are going to do with them if it is different from the routine.

7. Consider that the more excited, afraid, angry, these students are, the more stiff or out of control their muscles become. Again, it is best to allow them to express their feelings and then help them to relax by talking gently. When these students are relaxed, they are usually in more control of their muscles.

8. Be aware of where arms and legs are when going through doorways, through tight spaces, etc. Do not force limbs. Instead talk gently and as the muscles relax, gently place arms or legs in position and gently hold them in place. (Some of these students might wear restraints on their arms, legs, or feet to keep them in position.

9. Remember that these students don't always or may never have control over their muscles. They need to have help in learning to relax in new situations. Routines often help them feel more comfortable and to relax. Be careful not to think that the student is doing things on purpose to annoy the driver (though some might) without first learning a little about how the student reacts to various situations.

Chronic Illness

This is the term for temporary or permanent health conditions which are otherwise not categorized but which make it impractical for the student to receive adequate education through the regular school program. Conditions include tuberculosis, epilepsy, cardiac condition, leukemia, asthma, malnutrition, pregnancy and other physical disabilities.

Down Syndrome

This is the largest single syndrome that is accompanied by severe retardation. It occurs in all levels of society. It is caused by a genetic malformation at conception.

Children with Down Syndrome are usually short with small, wide face and slanted, almond-shaped eyes that give them a slightly oriental appearance. In the "old days" their appearance led to the use of the term "mongoloid." That term is no longer acceptable to use. The child with Down Syndrome has a special reputation for being happier, more friendly, and more easily managed than others with mental retardation.

Equipment: Nothing special, although sometimes other complicating conditions require more equipment.

Special Concerns:

1. These students may have poor coordination, and slow reactions. Repeat instructions and be patient.

2. These students are more likely to have congenital heart problems; check information on them for any warnings or precautions.

3. Mouth breathing makes students with Down Syndrome susceptible to upper respiratory infections.

4. These students usually respond well to praise and affection.

(For further information, see mental retardation description.)

Emotional Disorders (ED)

Students whose behavior is dangerous to themselves or others, or which seriously interferes with their learning are classified as ED. The causes may be genetic, biological, learned behavior, or a combination of factors.

Equipment: If written into the IEP, may use seat belt or harness as a restraint on some ED students.

Special Concerns:

A child who is emotionally disturbed in the public school setting may be described as a child who is:[2]

1. Easily angered, tendency to bully weaker students, frequent fighting. Assign seat away from others as consequence of misbehavior. Many of these students cause problems to get attention; depriving them of that attention is an effective consequence.

2. Work with the school to learn what they have found works best to motivate the student to good behavior or to deter him/her from misbehavior.

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[2]State Department of Louisiana

3. Be aware that these students have low self-esteem and may express it by being extremely withdrawn for extended periods of time.

4. Although these students are apt to be loud and overactive, it is the quiet, withdrawn ones who are likely to cause the most serious problems.

Hydrocephaly

This refers to the enlargement of the head caused by accumulations of fluids in the brain. May be caused by genetic factors, accidents, or infection. Can cause mental retardation if present in early years. Can cause headaches and mental disturbances if it occurs after the skull is formed. Rare, now that medical technology has provided shunts to drain off excess fluid in both adults and infants.

Special Concerns:

1. If a student with hydrocephaly complains of a headache it should be reported to school personnel or parents.

2. These student should be protected from blows/bumps to the head in the area where the shunt is placed.

Learning Disabled

Learning disabled (LD) means severe and unique learning problems as a result of significant difficulties in acquiring, organizing, expressing specific academic skills or concepts. These learning problems are typically seen in school functioning as the student performs very poorly in such areas as reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic reasoning or calculation, oral expression or comprehension, or the acquisition of basic concepts.

The term "learning disabilities" is used to describe a wide range of conditions such as attention deficit,. perceptual handicaps, process disorders, minimal brain dysfunction, brain injury, dyslexia, developmental aphasia, or sensory-motor dysfunction, when consistent with these criteria. Learning disabilities are manifested in many different ways. For example, perceptual disorders hinder the brain's ability to organize and interpret sights and sounds. Students with a perceptual disorder may be unable to pinpoint where one word ends and another begins on a page. Or, they may not be able to distinguish between words that sound a little alike. Another type of learning disability affects memory. Children with this type of LD can't recall what familiar objects look like or what sounds the objects make. They may not be able to remember a series of instructions or learn a sequence, such as the alphabet or a telephone number. Other learning disabilities interfere with the child's ability to behave properly and to concentrate. Some children are distractible and will daydream almost constantly.

Special Concerns[3]

1. These students look "normal." Drivers need to be aware that although these students appear to be listening or reading, they might not be able to read or hear rules and instructions. Rules and instructions need to be explained in simple clear terms and may need to be repeated over and over again. Tell students what to do. They will be confused if you only tell them to quit or stop. Instead show, explain, repeat and enforce what you want them to do.

2. LD students do better if their lives are structured and consistent. The driver's behavior needs to be consistent. The students seat assignment, the rules and consequences of breaking the rules need to be consistent and enforced consistently.

3. The driver needs to be firm; letting the student know that he/she is in control of the student's safety while on the bus. The driver needs to conduct him/herself as an adult in charge providing firm consistent guidance for students with LD.

Mental Retardation

Retardation means possessing intellectual capacity below the average range of intelligence as well as problems adapting to new situations and experiences which adversely affect learning and social functioning.

Equipment: Nothing specifically, though other complicating conditions may require special equipment.

Special Concerns:

1. Because these students are slow to understand and react to instructions, be patient.

2. Because of accompanying problems, many are prone to seizures. Be prepared.

3. Can be either willing to please and cooperative or stubborn and uncooperative. Again, be patient and repeat instructions until the student complies.

Microcephaly

Characterized by a small skull, and small brain. Severe mental retardation is usually associated with microcephaly. Apparently results from either inherited

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[3]"The Learning Disabled Child" Insight and Strategies for the School Bus Driver" unpublished paper by Linda Bluth.

cause, prenatal factors, including massive doses of radiation, or injuries at birth such as the cutoff of oxygen.

Special Concerns:

1. Be patient and understanding, as with all students.

2. Be aware of, and alert for any particular medical complications such as seizures.

Muscular Dystrophy (MD)

MD involves the deterioration and wasting away of muscle tissue on the outside of the body frame. Usually begins at the shoulders and hips and progresses out to the hands and feet. Children usually walk until about age 8 or 9 years when weakness forces them into a wheelchair. For Duchenne's, the most common type, the life span is 14 to 18 years.

Equipment: Long leg braces (usually just before going into a wheelchair), crutches, wheelchairs, back braces, arm feeders attached to wheelchairs.

Special Concerns:

1. Because of muscle weakness, may not be able to catch themselves if they start to fall. Will probably need help getting back up.

2. Weakness of arms makes it impossible for them to help someone lift them. Be careful to not let them slip through your arms when lifting.

3. Weakness of neck and trunk may make it impossible for them to hold neck or body in an upright position. Assistance may be needed if head falls.

4. Difficult time coughing and fighting off colds and illness.

5. Brittle bones, be careful when handling them.

6. May have emotional problems coping with the progression of the disease, be supportive.

Orthopedically Handicapped

This refers to students who, because of malformation, malfunction, or loss of bones, muscle or body tissue, require special education, special equipment, or special facilities for learning and other school activities. Unless they have other disorders, these students often are mainstreamed into regular classrooms in regular schools.

Equipment: All types of braces, casts, walkers, mobility devices (wheelchairs, power scooters, etc.), communication devices, lap trays, book bags.

Special Concerns

1. Whatever is required by their condition. Remember that many persons with other disorders are also considered orthopedically handicapped.

2. Remember that many of these students with physical disabilities have average intelligence and should be treated accordingly.

3. Because their needs differ to a great extent, it is important to learn the needs of each individual and try to meet those as they relate to transportation.

Osteogenesis Imperfecta (Brittle Bone Disease)

May suffer from multiple fractures if minor pressure or stress is imposed.

Equipment: Usually a wheelchair.

Special Concerns:

Because of the extremely delicate nature of this disease, where even a bump in the road can cause a fracture, it is in the child's best interest to find an alternative form of transportation, paid for by the school district. Each of these student's fitness for transportation should be evaluated and determine individually by the IEP team.

Spina Bifida and Spinal Cord Injuries

Spina Bifida (pronounced Spynah Byfidah) is caused by a malformation or incomplete formation of the spinal cord, occurring before birth. Spinal cord injuries are usually caused by traumatic injuries (car accident, etc.) to the spinal cord. Both of these result in partial or complete paralysis of the muscles of the trunk or legs (paraplegic). Sometimes the arms are also involved (quadriplegic). Legs may be completely floppy or very stiff.

Equipment: Crutches, braces, wheelchairs (with or without adaptations for posture) helmets, walkers, diapers or ostomy bags.

Special Concerns:

1. May not feel pain or heat in affected areas (legs, hips,buttocks). Report any bumps, bruises, cuts or burns that occur in transit. May have very slow healing due to poor circulation in these areas.

2. May not have bowel and/or bladder control. Some may wear diapers but most should be on some type of bowel and/or bladder management program so that accidents do not occur. Some may wear a urine collection bag. This should be emptied at home or at school. If you smell urine or feces on students report it to the school and/or the parents as appropriate.

3. If walking, they may have balance problems.

4. Emotional, irritable, angry behavior may be common among students with spinal cord injury as they adjust to their condition.

5. Some children with Spina Bifida are also mentally retarded. Some are not. Many children with Spina Bifida are very social, chatty friendly, and appear to know what they are talking about., but in fact are not paying very close attention or may not be as "smart" as they seem. These students sometimes get into trouble when people expect more of them than they can really handle. Know the student and his or her abilities before putting them in any position of responsibility or accepting that they can do something on their own before you have seen them do it as they should.

Visually Handicapped

Visual impairments range from partially sighted to blindness. Some students may have good close vision but no distant vision. Others may have poor peripheral vision. Severe astigmatism, nystagmus, (fluttering eye control), or strabismus (crossed eyes) may be present. Again, a student may be visually handicapped only or may have a number of handicaps including poor vision.

Equipment: Special glasses, long white cane.

Special Concerns:

1. Students may have difficulty in new surroundings. Seat them in the same seat daily, preferably by the door.

2. Verbal instructions might be needed to help the student in unfamiliar surroundings. For example, "five feet to the door, two steps down."

3. Always state the students name before talking to them so that they know that you are talking to them.

4. If the student requires assistance, always explain what you are going to do before assisting.

5. If walking with or guiding the student, allow the student to place his/her hand in the crook of your arm. Do not grab the student or pull them along by the hand or the arm.

Pupil Transportation Services: A Self Evaluation

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

November 1991

Donated to:

Human Resources Research
and Development Committee
by Dr. Floyd Smith

TRANSPORTATION

INTRODUCTION

Transportation systems vary greatly in size of fleet and the use of local school district resources, however, all systems perform the same functions and should be structured to assure safe, efficient transportation service.

Safety and efficiency are the results of management's ability to identify the required functional areas and address them with a competent staff and reasonable resources to assure that children, the staff, district, and community resources are protected. Unfortunately, problems connected with these functional areas often go undetected until a loss occurs and the costs are unacceptable.

When the business is that of providing a service for impulsive, active community youth, the acceptable range of error must be taken to an absolute minimum. Transportation is also a business that must operate by acceptable business procedures.

The following survey items are certainly not a complete list of program profile issues, however, they have been selected to emphasize the specialized nature of the service that is to be provided and the modified business practices that are required to assure the safety of those being served.

I. Administration
   - A. Policy
   - B. Operations
   - C. Planning

II. Operations and office management
   - A. Personnel
   - B. Routing

III. Fleet maintenance and operations
   - A. Inventory control
   - B. Maintenance procedures and scheduling
   - C. Personnel and work safety

I. ADMINISTRATION	Yes	No	N/A
A. Policy			
1. The Board of Education has adopted written policies and rules specifying:			
a. Pupil walking distance to school and stops	( )	( )	( )
b. Vehicle use for field trips, community activities, "nonpublic" pupil service, and private party service requests.	( )	( )	( )
c. Pupil supervision requirements of staffing school loading areas and bus stops.	( )	( )	( )
d. Information process for notifying parents and pupils of rider rules, program objectives, schedules, and personnel communication methods.	( )	( )	( )
e. The approved methods of pupil traffic safety and transportation education.	( )	( )	( )
f. Passengers are only to be picked up or discharged at school management designated stops unless guardian requests for alternative services are approved.	( )	( )	( )
g. The acceptable class of vehicles to be used for transporting pupils.	( )	( )	( )
h. Review procedures for students who qualify for special education transportation.	( )	( )	( )
B. Operations:			
1. Staff job descriptions have been prepared and timely qualification/certification status reports are maintained for:			
a. The manager	( )	( )	( )
b. Operations supervisor(s)	( )	( )	( )
c. Dispatcher(s)	( )	( )	( )
d. Driver trainer(s)	( )	( )	( )
e. Secretary(ies)	( )	( )	( )
f. Fleet maintenance supervisor(s)	( )	( )	( )
g Head maintenance technician(s) (mechanics)	( )	( )	( )
h. Maintenance technician(s) (mechanics)	( )	( )	( )
i. Maintenance helper(s)	( )	( )	( )
j. Driver and substitute driver(s)	( )	( )	( )
k. Driver(s) of special education pupils	( )	( )	( )
l. Attendant(s) / aide(s)	( )	( )	( )
m. Substitute(s)	( )	( )	( )

I. ADMINISTRATION (CONT.)	Yes	No	N/A
2. Driver education programs are in place and include:			
a. Bus driver procedural "risk" management for:			
(1) Railroad crossings	( )	( )	( )
(2) Bus stops	( )	( )	( )
(3) Behavior disruptions	( )	( )	( )
(4) School loading areas	( )	( )	( )
(5) Disabled vehicle	( )	( )	( )
(6) Fire control incidents	( )	( )	( )
(7) Pupil illness	( )	( )	( )
(8) Passenger evacuation procedure	( )	( )	( )
b. Defensive driving procedures.	( )	( )	( )
c. Vehicle inspection and mechanical system performance monitoring.	( )	( )	( )
d. Bleeding, shock, breathing, CPR, communicable disease, and choking treatments/control methods.	( )	( )	( )
e. Law and procedural liability control.	( )	( )	( )
f. Behavior management and methods.	( )	( )	( )
g. Pupil rider count instruction.	( )	( )	( )
h. Child development and behavioral expectations.	( )	( )	( )
i. A 40-hour (minimum) "behind the wheel" individual teaching experience.	( )	( )	( )
j. Health and care assurance of the special education pupils.	( )	( )	( )
3. All prospective transportation employees are interviewed and records are reviewed by departmental management.	( )	( )	( )
4. All staff procedural performance and assignment performance are observed and documented no less than once per year.	( )	( )	( )
5. An annual plan for staff entry-level education, continuing education, and retraining programs are documented and the instructional staff is identified.	( )	( )	( )
6. Departmental purchasing practices conform with state and district requirements, are documented, and are designed to assure rapid, efficient arrival of parts and services and competitive price minimums with equal vendor consideration.	( )	( )	( )

I. ADMINISTRATION (CONT.)	Yes	No	N/A
7. Departmental staff teams design and document rationale of all equipment and parts specifications and assure, through documentation, their role as design participants.	( )	( )	( )
8. Departmental management maintains a liaison relationship with:			
a. State law enforcement representatives	( )	( )	( )
b. Local law enforcement representatives	( )	( )	( )
c. State Department of Education representatives	( )	( )	( )
d. Local road authority representatives	( )	( )	( )
e. Community emergency planning unit representatives	( )	( )	( )
f. District administrative council	( )	( )	( )
9. Staff personal accident reporting system is in place, quarterly summary reports are prepared, and the fire and injury control facilities and procedural plans are reviewed each year for:			
a. Vehicle service areas	( )	( )	( )
b. Fueling areas	( )	( )	( )
c. Vehicle storage areas	( )	( )	( )
10. Legal, regulatory, procedural, and service specification data are maintained and made conveniently available to all staff members.	( )	( )	( )
11. Signed and dated staff acceptance of all procedural guides and test scores reflecting the level of understanding are documented and summarized in the manager's office.	( )	( )	( )
12. Documented proof of all contractor and contracted service agent compliance with all laws, regulations, and acceptable product standards of safety are maintained in the manager's office.	( )	( )	( )
13. Bus stops are annually reviewed and office documentation is maintained on sight distance, traffic volume and speed, pupil waiting area, and pedestrian path acceptability.	( )	( )	( )
14. Pupil traffic safety risk avoidance objectives and bus rider safety education protective procedures are specifically identified for all age grade level pupils and instructional programs are being conducted.	( )	( )	( )
15. The manager is willing to factually confront problems with staff, assist staff in planning problem resolution, and enthusiastically recognizes staff accomplishments.	( )	( )	( )
16. School passenger loading areas are free of automobile and pedestrian traffic conflicts.	( )	( )	( )

I. ADMINISTRATION (CONT.)	Yes	No	N/A
17. Parents receive notice of pupil(s) bus stop locations and bus arrival time prior to the start of school.	( )	( )	( )
C. Planning			
1. Departmental project and long-range planning teams are established to document goals, objectives, and accomplishments which are prepared as an annual report.	( )	( )	( )
2. Community road network maps displaying bus stops, student numbers, and high-lighted routes are prepared for all grade levels and pupils assigned to special programs.	( )	( )	( )
3. Annual reports of school start times and simulated transportation system efficiency options are documented.	( )	( )	( )
4. Quarterly vehicle utilization reports identifying actual hourly activity and percentage of daily hour rating, passengers served, and accumulated mileages are prepared for all fleet vehicles.	( )	( )	( )
5. Vehicle replacement plans reflecting performance level, maintenance mileage costs, and projected service demand levels are prepared by November 1 of each school year.	( )	( )	( )
6. Departmental operations and staff needs assessments are prepared for a semiannual review and resource assignment adjustments.	( )	( )	( )
7. A specific chart of staff communication for parents, driver, and administration is established and a log of contacts and resolutions is maintained and reviewed periodically.	( )	( )	( )
8. Energy management and hazardous waste management program plans and semi-annual documented performance assessments are maintained in the manager's office.	( )	( )	( )
9. Fleet vehicle accident summary data is prepared from the National Uniform Accident Report records and analyzed on a quarterly basis.	( )	( )	( )
10. Departmental Management prepares an annual budget, reviews monthly and annual "to-date" expenditures for departmental activity control.	( )	( )	( )
11. Special education pupil needs are consultant team evaluated for equipment and personal restraint system design.	( )	( )	( )

II. OPERATIONS AND OFFICE MANAGEMENT	Yes	No	N/A
A. Personnel			
1. Specific staff are trained and assigned the following personnel duties:			
a. Dispatching, monitoring, and modifying driver and vehicle assignments	( )	( )	( )
b. Pupil discipline	( )	( )	( )
c. Financial record management, and business office contact for expenditure posting, program cost report preparation, payroll generation, inventory maintenance, and budget review.	( )	( )	( )
d. Bus stop selection and review	( )	( )	( )
e. Staff driving procedure monitoring and instruction	( )	( )	( )
f. Communicating with parents/students	( )	( )	( )
g. Communicating with driver, mechanic, and office staff regarding procedure manual production and updating	( )	( )	( )
h. Communicating with administrative/instructional staff	( )	( )	( )
i. Personnel seniority and assignment selection listings	( )	( )	( )
j. Personnel timekeeping and payroll	( )	( )	( )
2. Drivers are assigned a team management responsibility to monitor route, traffic, and student risk conditions and are rewarded for performance standard improvements.	( )	( )	( )
3. Drivers and management serve as accident and fleet review team.	( )	( )	( )
4. Employee responsibility for continuous monitoring and compliance for:			
a. License renewals	( )	( )	( )
b. Performance	( )	( )	( )
c. Physicals/TB tests	( )	( )	( )
d. Education (entry)	( )	( )	( )
e. Education (continuing)	( )	( )	( )
f. Driving record	( )	( )	( )
5. Functional assignment preparation for additional "back up" office staff is in place.	( )	( )	( )

II. OPERATIONS AND OFFICE MANAGEMENT (CONT.)	Yes	No	N/A
6. Office contingency plans and staff assignments are prepared for:			
a. Lost child	( )	( )	( )
b. Vehicle accidents	( )	( )	( )
c. Child injury	( )	( )	( )
d. Medically fragile children conditionally advanced	( )	( )	( )
e. Disabled vehicle	( )	( )	( )
f. Extra trip pupil injuries	( )	( )	( )
g. Early school closing	( )	( )	( )
h. Weather condition alerts	( )	( )	( )
i. Tornado sighting	( )	( )	( )
j. Pupil fights (in route)	( )	( )	( )
k. Bus fire	( )	( )	( )
l. Fleet vandalism	( )	( )	( )
m. Late return to storage	( )	( )	( )
n. Bomb threat	( )	( )	( )
o. Weapons/beepers	( )	( )	( )
A. Routing			
1. Specific staff are trained and assigned the following routing duties:			
a. Maintain street and address ranges for all stops.	( )	( )	( )
b. Map data preparation and activity reporting.	( )	( )	( )
c. Routing and census record maintenance and pupil seating assurance.	( )	( )	( )
d. Extra trip driver assignments.	( )	( )	( )
e. Preparation of 95% accurate route design, produce bus or driver daily listings of buildings served, pupils served by stops, mileage, time, total students per run.	( )	( )	( )
f. Preparation of district building attendance area maps for all building administration.	( )	( )	( )
g. Map displays of pupil grade levels and program assigned pupils.	( )	( )	( )
h. Preparation of building lists of pupil passengers by bus number stop assignment, sequenced stop locations and pupil demographics.	( )	( )	( )
i. Route adjustment plan for overloading, excessive riding time, or late school arrivals.	( )	( )	( )

II. OPERATIONS AND OFFICE MANAGEMENT (CONT.)	Yes	No	N/A
j. Route design and route modification contingency plan for special education student service.	( )	( )	( )
k. Route design and maintenance for kindergarten pupils.	( )	( )	( )
l. Periodic preparation of passenger rider count daily audits reflecting 98% accuracy with route passenger assignment records.	( )	( )	( )
m. Monitor special education pupil rider times to identify ride times in excess of 60 minutes.	( )	( )	( )
n. Current maps of all district roads, bridges, and construction limitations, and route modification plans are available.	( )	( )	( )
o. Document and review pupil stop/route assignments to eliminate road "crossover" actions of pupils and bus "turn around" at all high risk roadway locations.III.	( )	( )	( )

FLEET MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS

A. Inventory control

1. Vehicle inventory records are current and include:

a. Chassis/year manufactured	( )	( )	( )
b. Body/capacity	( )	( )	( )
c. Engine size	( )	( )	( )
d. Fuel type	( )	( )	( )
e. Purchase price w/wo interest	( )	( )	( )
f. Annual amortization	( )	( )	( )
g. Engine ID number	( )	( )	( )
h. Vehicle ID number	( )	( )	( )
i. Transmission ID number	( )	( )	( )
j. Sale price	( )	( )	( )
k. License plate number	( )	( )	( )
l. Department assignment	( )	( )	( )
m. Current odometer	( )	( )	( )
n. Starting odometer	( )	( )	( )

2. Vehicle parts are stored in a secure location and monthly "sample" physical inventory/verification is conducted and documented. ( ) ( ) ( )

3. Work order procedures identifying required parts, labor agent, time, repair classification, and combined costs are the only parts procurement authorization. ( ) ( ) ( )

III. FLEET MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS (CONT.)	Yes	No	N/A
4. Parts inventory, purchasing procedures, and cost reports reveal:			
a. Manufacturer	( )	( )	( )
b. Parts available	( )	( )	( )
c. Current costs	( )	( )	( )
d. Parts supplies	( )	( )	( )
e. Purchase price value	( )	( )	( )
f. Parts system classification and ID number	( )	( )	( )
g. Replacement level	( )	( )	( )
h. Performance trends of components	( )	( )	( )
5. Fuel delivery and physical quantity monitoring record keeping system is in place to reveal fuel supplies at a 98% accuracy level.	( )	( )	( )
6. Contracted maintenance cost reports are reviewed quarterly for budget allocations.	( )	( )	( )
7. A hazardous waste management program is posted and written records are summarized to verify procedural compliance.	( )	( )	( )
8. A vehicle maintenance history report of cost/10,000 miles is maintained revealing fleet average costs and vehicle comparisons for all fleet vehicles.	( )	( )	( )
B. Maintenance procedures and scheduling:			
1. Driver pre-trip and post-trip inspection reports are used as a means for producing work orders.	( )	( )	( )
2. Disabled vehicle incident repair quarterly reporting:			
a. Insurance/accident costs	( )	( )	( )
b. Warranty repair costs	( )	( )	( )
c. Operational failure	( )	( )	( )
d. Roadway/weather	( )	( )	( )
e. Driver error	( )	( )	( )
f. Costs to recover disabled vehicle	( )	( )	( )
3. Weekly vehicle maintenance scheduling based on time, distance inspections, or incidents are prepared.	( )	( )	( )
4. Weekly reports of vehicle fuel, oil, and coolant use per mile reveal a fleet priority listing of vehicle performance problems.	( )	( )	( )
5. Mileage and time preventative maintenance schedules are in place and posted as a vehicle service schedule for all fleet vehicles.	( )	( )	( )

III. FLEET MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS (CONT.)	Yes	No	N/A
6. Quarterly vehicle maintenance exception reports reveal unusual vehicle performance ratings and "flagged" costs.	( )	( )	( )
7. Fuel conservation procedures are described and staff procedural compliance is documented.	( )	( )	( )
8. Daily accumulated vehicle route mileage summary reports are produced on a monthly basis.	( )	( )	( )
9. Disabled vehicle recovery procedures are specified in writing and personnel are trained and certified to provide service.	( )	( )	( )
10. Annual Michigan State Police vehicle inspections of all pupil transportation fleet vehicles are summarized and reviewed for maintenance personnel performance review.	( )	( )	( )
11. Vehicle repair history records are readily available to all maintenance technicians for any vehicle being serviced.	( )	( )	( )
12. Vehicle interiors and exteriors are clean and well maintained.	( )	( )	( )
13. Customized preventative maintenance schedules are designed for all special education buses, equipment, and restrain systems.	( )	( )	( )
C. Personnel and work safety:			
1. A maintenance technician and support staff continuing education program is cooperatively constructed with staff and documented competency attainment is recorded.	( )	( )	( )
2. Climatically controlled, well-lighted service areas are provided for all work stations.	( )	( )	( )
3. Adequate service staff are employed to perform maintenance functions on a timely basis for all fleet vehicles.	( )	( )	( )
4. Fire suppression equipment and procedures are prominently displayed and readily available within 50' of garage service areas and fueling locations.	( )	( )	( )
5. Service improvement staff suggestion program is in place as a part of the planning effort.	( )	( )	( )
6. Garage service equipment and environmental control equipment are safety inspected quarterly with condition and repairs documented for transportation management.	( )	( )	( )

SAMPLE FORMS

This section includes some sample forms and letters that School Transportation Supervisors might find useful in developing transportation procedures.

Letter to Parents: Notice of Policy Change Re: Curb to Curb[1]

DATE:

TO: Parents of Education Students Who Receive Curb-to-Curb Transportation Services

FROM: _____ Director of Transportation

_____ Executive Director of Special Education

SUBJECT: Revised Policy RE: Transportation

Please be advised the Aurora Public Schools implemented a major change, effective November 1, 1986, with regard to transporting students who receive curb-to-curb service. The change is designed to guarantee close student supervision and safety and is the result of continuing requests by parents to drop off special education students in an unattended, unsupervised setting. Additionally, it is necessary because the buses simply cannot continue to return to an empty house as many as six or seven times per evening, attempting to deliver students.

You are requested to identify one morning pick-up address and one afternoon drop off address, coupled with the name of one responsible neighbor who is willing to receive (child's name) if you are not home. If no one is home at either your house or the neighbor's when the bus arrives, (child's name) will be transported to South Middle School, 12310 East Parkview Drive, Aurora, where (he/she) will be closely supervised by trained personnel until you arrive to pick (him/her) up. (Each time this occurs, you will be assessed a fee of $20.00 to cover the cost of the supervision after school hours.) If you have not arrived for your child by 5:30 p.m. (child's name) will be transported by the Aurora Police Department to the Department of Social Services where they will be supervised until your arrival.

Should you so choose, on the attached form you may indicate that (child's name) has your permission to possess a key to your home, thereby entering your house unassisted if no one is home when the bus arrives. It should also be noted that bus drivers will not in any way retain the house key for (child's name).

This procedure was unanimously endorsed by the Board of Education. Both the District Administration and the Board of Education expect parents to provide proper supervision for their children by guaranteeing that someone is home to receive them off the bus as the District continues to provide curb-to-curb service. Your child's driver will continue to be as punctual as possible with regard to the time schedule they have provided you.

On the attached form, please indicate the important pieces of information requested AND RETURN TO YOUR CHILD'S DRIVER. Thank you for your cooperation.

---

[1] Transporting The Special Needs Student. The Colorado State Pupil Transportation Association, 1991, p. 99.

Request for Student Information[2]

PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION AS REQUESTED AND RETURN TO YOUR CHILD'S BUS DRIVER.

Child's Name:_____

School of Attendance_____

AM Pick Up Address_____

Phone_____

PM Drop Off Address_____

Phone_____

Responsible Neighbor _____

Address _____

Phone_____

Please Read and Initial the Following.

_____If I am not an home when the bus arrives with my child, the neighbor listed above will receive and be responsible for my child.

_____If I am not at home when the bus arrives with my child, my child may use his/her personal house key and enter the house unattended. I understand that my child must be physically capable of entering the house unassisted in order to use this option.

_____If I am not at home when the bus arrives with my child, I understand that my child will be transported to a school site and supervised by school personnel until either (a) my arrival, or (b) 5:30 PM at which time my child will be transported to Social Services, I further understand that I will be assessed a fee of $20.00 per occurrence to cover the after-school supervision expenses.

NOTE: Failure to return this form will result in the Transportation Department automatically delivering your child to South Middle School should you not be home to receive your child.

---

[2]Transporting The Special Needs Student. The Colorado State Pupil Transportation Association, 1991, p. 100.

Sample Request For Special Transportation Services[3]

DATE:_____ATTENDANCE CENTER:_____GRADE:_____

STUDENT NAME:_____
Last First Middle

ADDRESS:_____

MOTHER:_____PHONE:_____
Last First Home/Work

FATHER:_____PHONE:_____
Last First Home/Work

EMERGENCY CONTACT:_____PHONE:_____

TO BE TRANSPORTED FROM:_____TO:_____

DATE TRANSPORTATION SHOULD BEGIN:_____

_____Regular Education Transportation, if possible
_____Special Transportation needed
- _____Student can meet bus a reasonable distance from home.
- _____Maximum supervision needed - door to door
- _____Wheelchair transportation
- _____Other:_____

_____Special Considerations Needed
- _____Wheelchair transfers will be necessary
- _____Seatbelt mandatory (not required in regular education bus)
- _____Student has history of seizures
- _____Car Seat
- _____Behavior modification program needed
- _____Will need supervision from parent to driver to teacher
- _____Other:_____
- _____None of the above.

REQUESTED BY:_____DATE:_____
Staffing Team Member

APPROVED BY:_____DATE:_____
Special Education Administrator

RECEIVED BY:_____DATE:_____
Transportation

TRANSPORTATION TO BE PROVIDED ON BUS #_____

cc: Transportation (1) Attending School (2) Special Education Administrator (1)

---

[3]Transporting The Special Needs Student. The Colorado State Pupil Transportation Association, 1991,92.

Sample Request for Special Transportation Services[4]

_____Check here for Change of Address ONLY.

Name:_____Parent's Name:_____
Address:_____Home Phone:_____
City:_____Zip:_____Work Phone:_____

BUS STOPS, IF DIFFERENT FROM HOME ADDRESS:

AM Bus Stop:_____Phone at Address:_____
PM Bus Stop:_____Phone at Address:_____

Requested date to start transportation_____
(*Please allow 3 days from receipt by Transportation for service to begin)*

EMERGENCY CONTACTS AND/OR DROP-OFF LOCATIONS:

Name:_____Address:_____Phone:_____
Name:_____Address:_____Phone:_____

Assigned to Special Education Class:

School:_____Beginning Time:_____Dismissal Time:____
Category:_____Teacher:_____

Physical Limitations/Health Disorders (seizures, braces, wheelchair, blind, unintelligible speech, special behavior): _____

_____

Lift Bus Required? ___Yes ___No If yes, please specify: ___Stroller ___Wheelchair ___Other

Special assistance getting on/off the bus? ___Yes ___No Bus aide required? ___Yes ___No

Special equipment required (seat belt, harness)? Please specify:

Can student be picked up and dropped off at an existing bus stop nearby?__Yes ___No

_____
Special Education Director/Designee

---

[4]Transporting The Special Needs Student. The Colorado State Pupil Transportation Association, 1991, p. 93.

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

Begin transportation date:_____Arranged by:_____

AM Route:_____Driver:_____Contact parents?_____

PM Route:_____Driver:_____Contact parents?_____

Request for Special Education Transportation[5]

DATE:_____

NAME:_____BIRTHDATE:_____

STUDENT'S ADDRESS:_____

Contact Person:_____Phone:_____

PARENT'S NAME:_____PHONE(H)_____

ADDRESS:_____PHONE(W)_____

TYPE OF DISABILITY:_____PROGRAM:_____

SPECIAL BUSING: Chair Cab_____Curb to Curb_____Pick up Point_____

Special Equipment: (Walker, Oxygen Tank, Restraint)_____

_____

NEW STUDENT: Transport To:_____
Effective Date:_____

CHANGE FOR CONTINUING STUDENT: From:_____

To:_____

Effective Date:_____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

_____
Signature of Special Education Administration

Date transportation will begin_____Route #_____
Parents Have Been Notified by_____Date:_____
School Has Been Notified by_____Date:_____

_____
Transportation Representative

_____

[5]Transporting The Special Needs Student. The Colorado State Pupil Transportation Association, 1991, p. 94.

Emergency Information Request[6]

Name:_____Phone:_____
Birthdate:_____
Address:_____
City:_____State:_____Zip_____

To provide you with the best possible service in case of accident or sudden illness it is necessary that you complete, in full, the following information. Information is kept strictly confidential.

A. Identifying Information

Height____Weight____Hair Color_____Eye Color_____
Verbal (yes/no)___Language spoken/Understood_____
Hearing Impaired (yes/no)_____Visually Impaired (yes/no)_____
Physical Handicap (yes/no)_____Restrictions (yes/no)_____
Special Considerations_____

_____
Severe Emotional Behavior Present (yes/no)_____
Restrictions (yes/no)_____Special Considerations_____

_____

B. Family Information

Father_____Address:_____ Phone(H)_____
Phone(W)_____
Mother_____Address:_____Phone(H)_____
Phone(W)_____
Guardian_____Address:_____Phone(H)_____
Phone(W)_____

C. In emergency when neither parent/guardian can be reached, call:

Name:_____Address_____Phone_____

Doctor_____Address_____Phone_____

---

[6]Transporting The Special Needs Student. The Colorado State Pupil Transportation Association, 1991, p. 95.

D. In case no one is home when the bus arrives, list alternate address in the immediate area:

Name_____Address_____Phone_____

E. Medical History

1. Does student have seizures? No_____ Yes_____

2. Does student take medication? No_____ Yes_____
   If yes, list medication, dosage and frequency of use:

   _____

   _____

3. Is student allergic to food or medication? No_____ Yes_____
   If yes, please list allergies:_____

4. Does student have a bleeding disorder? No_____Yes_____

   Additional Information_____

   _____

5. Please list other diagnosis, disease or condition that we should know about to best serve the student (for example, diabetes):

   _____

****

F. Consent Form

I, _____, father, mother or legal guardian of_____
print your name *print child's name*
in the event of accident, injury or serious illness to him/her, do voluntarily hereby give consent to and authorize the Jefferson County Schools to secure medical aid or transportation to a medical facility. I understand that neither the Jefferson County Schools nor the individual responsible for obtaining medical aid will be responsible for expense incurred.

_____ Date:_____
Signature of parent/legal guardian

Sample Procedure for Student Drop-Off[7]

For those students that require supervision/assistance at the home drop-off, the following procedure will be used:

1. The driver will radio the Transportation Office when a responsible person is not present to meet the bus.

2. The Dispatcher/.designee will attempt to contact the home and check the records to see if a designated neighbor has been approved to accept the student. (If there is a bus assistant on this route, they mat be directed to go to the door to verify no one is at home.)

3. The Dispatcher/designee may instruct the driver to continue on the route, make additional stops and return to this stop, if appropriate.

4. The dispatcher/designee will make a follow-up attempt to contact the home.

5. When directed, the driver will make the second attempt to drop the student at home. If no one is there, the driver will again contact the Transportation Office by radio..

6. The Dispatcher/designee will instruct the driver to bring the student to the terminal. Additional attempts will be made to contact the home.

7. A designated office employee (manager, scheduler, dispatcher) will remain at the terminal to take responsibility for the child. If the parents cannot be contacted for approximately one hour after scheduled drop-off time, the Office of Social Services and/or local police will be contacted.

8. If this is a recurring problem, more than four times a year, the terminal manager/designee will write a letter to the parents outlining the District's procedure. (Sample on following page.)

---

[7] Transporting The Special Needs Student. The Colorado State Pupil Transportation Association, 1991, p. 97.

Letter to Parents: Arrival[8]

LETTERHEAD

DATE

PARENT NAME
ADDRESS
CITY,TOWN ZIP

DEAR

Please be aware that (name of child) will be arriving home between (time) and (time). It is necessary that a responsible adult meet the bus at that time, as the bus can wait only three (3) minutes before continuing to the next stop. The route has several other students to deliver to their homes and/or must be at another school on time. Please take the necessary steps to insure that a responsible adult is there to meet the bus.

If no one will be home to meet the bus, please call Transportation at (phone number) before 1:00 p.m. to let us know who will be taking (name of child) off the bus. At the present time, you and (name of 2nd adult) are the only people to whom we are authorized to release the child. If someone else will be meeting the bus, we will need written authorization from you.

If no one meets the bus, we will continue with the route and Social Services will be contacted and asked to meet the bus. At that time, (name of child) will be turned over to Social Services.

If you have any questions, please call me.

Sincerely,

Transportation Supervisor

cc: School
File

---

[8]Transporting The Special Needs Student. The Colorado State Pupil Transportation Association, 1991, p. 98.

Student Biographical Data Form[9]

District:_____

Name:_____
Last First Middle

Address:_____

_____
City State Zipcode

Date of Birth_____ Age_____ Sex: _____Male _____Female

Telephone :_____School Destination:_____

1. Parent/Guardian

Mother_____Father_____

Home Phone #_____Home Phone #_____

Work Phone #_____Work Phone #_____

2 Babysitter (AM/PM)

Name:_____Phone #_____

Address:_____

3. Neighbor/Relative

Name:_____Phone #_____

Address:_____

5. Physician

Name:_____Phone #_____

Address:_____

[9]Hand out from Linda F. Bluth, Ed.D., Quality Assurance Specialist,Office for Children, Youth and Families, Baltimore Maryland.

6. Emergency Contact

Name:_____Phone #_____

Address:_____

Handicapping Condition_____

Onset of Handicap: Congenital_____ Acquired (date)_____

History of: Seizures?___ Extent of control:_____

Loss of Consciousness?_____Extent of Control_____

Brittle Bones?_____ Hemophyliac?_____ Medical Alert?_____

Tracheostomy_____

Current Medications and possible side effects:

_____

_____

Physical Limitations:

_____

_____

Visual Limitations:

_____

_____

Specific Instructions:

Lifting:_____

Bus Drill Restrictions:_____

Loading/Unloading:_____

Seat Restraints?_____Respiratory Aides?_____

Leg Braces?_____Arm/Hand Braces?_____

Car Seat?_____ Wheelchair?_____

Allergies?_____

Emergency Procedures:_____

Additional Comments/Recommendations:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Date Signature/Title

Consent for Disclosure of Medical Information and Records[10]

TO: _____

_____

_____

(Physician's Name and Address)

I, _____, the (parent) (guardian) of _____

_____consent and authorize you to disclose

and provide to the _____

nursing and other necessary staff, upon their request, any information or records which you have or have obtained concerning the diagnosis, evaluations, tests, medical problems or conditions, medications, or treatments of my child or ward named above.

It is the expressed intent of this document to waive any and all privileges which I or my child or ward might have with respect to disclosure of the above information and records to the school district, including the doctor-patient privilege, psychologist -client privilege, and social worker-client privilege.

_____

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Dated:_____

Please Return To _____

_____

_____

---

[10]National Standards for School Buses and Operations, 1990 Revised Edition, p. 80.

Request for Medical Verification of Health Status and Needs[11]

_____School District

_____

_____

_____
(Address)

Name:_____ Birthdate:_____

Address:_____Phone:_____

Parent/Guardian:_____Phone:_____

Address (If different):_____

Physician:_____Phone:_____

Note to Physician: Should you have any questions regarding this request, please contact:
_____; Phone_____

I. Verification of Medical, Health and Behavior Status

A. Briefly describe the current medical, health and behavioral status.
B. Identify any medical conditions not addressed in A above.
C. Identify any health concerns that are not addressed in A above.
D. Identify any behavioral concerns that are not addressed above.

II. Participation in the School Day Program

A. Briefly describe the staff supervision and interventions necessary for the student to safely participate in the normal school day program given the student's health and medical status.
B. Identify the training required for all staff including bus attendants and drivers to provide the supervision and interventions addressed in A above.
C. Identify any additional restrictions or modifications in school activities or medical care that would be necessary for student to safely participate in the school day program.
D. Identify any additional special equipment, aids, restraints, or mobility assistance needed for student to safely participate in the school day program.

---

[11] National Standards for School Buses and Operations, 1990 Revised Edition, p. 81.

Medical Procedure Authorization[12]

I delegate and authorize the staff of the _____ School District perform for _____(student) the acts, tasks, and functions indicated on the Request for Medical Verification of Health Status and Needs, dated _____which I previously provided to the district. This authorization is subject to the condition that district staff assigned to perform these activities have been provided the required training as specified in the above mentioned Request.

I have reviewed the attached procedures for _____(procedure) which will be utilized and approve them, subject to any specific modifications necessary for this student which I have noted on the procedures.

I agree to supervise the performance of these activities and procedures by being continuously available through direct communications with district staff performing them and by regularly reviewing the student's health/medical status and needs, as well as the procedures being utilized by the staff.

_____
(Signature of Physician)

_____
(Date)

[12]National Standards for School Buses and Operations, 1990 Revised Edition, p. 82.

Student Transportation Card[13]

Student's Name_____Age_____

Address_____ Home Phone:_____

Father's Work #_____Mother's Work #_____Emergency#_____

Please check appropriate type of transportation required for your child:

❑ Walks to bus unassisted ❑ Walks to bus, but needs assistance ❑ Needs to be carried
❑ Requires a car seat ❑ Wheelchair ❑ Requires special restraint
Needs to be met at school? Other (Specify)_____
On return/home, needs to be met at Bus Stop?_____

Names & Addresses of persons nearby student's residence who have consented to care for the student if the parents are not available:

Name:_____ Address_____Phone_____
Name:_____ Address_____Phone_____
Name:_____ Address_____Phone_____

Please check if any of the following applies to your child: ❑ Asthma ❑ Heart Disease ❑ Diabetes

❑ Chronic Respiratory Problems ❑ Blind ❑ Deaf ❑ Non-Verbal ❑ Bee Sting ❑ Hemophiliac

❑ Allergies--to What?_____

❑ Seizures- How long does seizure last?_____
How often do they occur?_____

_____Action needed, if any_____

Is your child on medication? ❑ Yes ❑ No If yes, what medication, what dosage and when given?

_____

Family
Doctor_____Address_____

Doctor's Phone_____Family designated hospital_____

_____

[13]National Standards for School Buses and Operations, 1990 Revised Edition, p. 83.

Parental Contact: If possible and practical, in the event of major emergency, parent contact will be made.
Parental Approval: If in the opinion of the driver a major emergency exists, the parent(s) have agreed in writing and will assume the cost of:

1. Contacting the family doctor ❑ Yes ❑ No
2. Contacting any doctor available ❑ Yes ❑ No
3. Contacting rescue squad ❑ Yes ❑ No
4. Transporting to designated hospital ❑ Yes ❑ No

Other helpful Information:_____

_____

As parent or guardian, I agree to one or more of the above procedures as indicated and agree that this information may be shared with my child's transporter. **Confidentiality will be maintained.**

Date:_____ Parent/Guardian Signature_____

Do Not Write Below This Line

Bus Company_____Bus No._____School Attending_____

Telephone_____Special Instructions for Driver:_____

_____

Transportation Data Retrieval Form[14]

Pupil Number_____ Current Sch/Grd:_____
Pupil Name:_____ Assigned Sch/Grd_____
Home Address:_____ DOB:_____
_____Race/Sex_____
Home Phone:_____FCI:_____Level:___

Parent/Guardian Name_____
Emergency Contact Person _____
Emergency Address_____
Emergency Phone:_____

Date to Begin:_____
Program:_____

School Hours___AM From_____to_____

___PM From_____to_____

___Full day From_____to_____

___Two days (Circle appropriate days M T W TH F) From___to__

Bus Number_____ Route Number _____

Pick up Address (If different)_____

Drop off Address (if different) _____

Special Adapted Equipment ❑ Wheelchair ❑ Car Seat ❑ Seat Belt

Special Condition Codes (Circle all that apply):

A. Non-verbal
B. Allergies
C. Seizures
D. Ostomy Bag
E. Unusual Bleeding (Hemophilia)
F. Heart Problem
G. Stomach Tube
H. Self-Help Problem (e.g. toileting)

I. Type of Medication_____

J. Communicable Disease:_____

K. Other:_____

Completed by_____Date_____Phone_____

[14]"Transporting Handicapped Students", November 23, 1991, p. 6

RESOURCES

Training Resources

The **Clearinghouse on School Transportation** provides a wealth of information for those looking for ideas and examples to improve the safety and efficiency of transportation programs. The Clearinghouse advertises the availability of materials useful to school systems. The clearinghouse sells a Bibliography of materials available. The Bibliography available at the 1st National Conference and Exhibition on Transporting Students with Disabilities in Dallas, Texas March, 1992 included the following titles:

-Emergency Evacuation Drill Procedures for Handicapped Passengers
-Emergency Evacuation of Wheelchair Buses: A workshop for School Bus Drivers and Attendants; "Two Minutes or Less"
-Handicapped Transportation
-Instructor's Basic Curriculum Guide for the Effective Driver
-Monitor Training
-Oregon School Bus Drivers Training Program Students Handbook; Unit C Transporting Exceptional Students
-Special Education Transportation Manual
-State of Louisiana Department of Education Special Education Transportation Guide
-Study of Transportation of Medically Fragile Children
-The Effective Driver of Handicapped Students
-Transportation Service for Special Education Students
-Transporting the Special Needs Student
-Wheelchair and Occupant Restraint on School Buses
-1990 National Standards for School Buses and Operations
-The ABC's of School Bus Safety
-Issues in Pupil Transportation
-Pre-Service Instructor's Guide
-Pupil Transportation Management
-Pupil Transportation Supervisor's Reference Manual
-School Bus Accidents: A Manual of Procedures
-School bus Safety Curriculum
-School Bus Safety: An EGG-cellent Idea
-School Safety Planning: For Vehicle & Pedestrian Traffic
-The Need for and Feasibility of Requiring School Bus Safety Monitors; Report of the School Transportation Safety Commission

To receive information on subscribing to the Clearinghouse Bibliography service write or phone: Roseann Schwader

Serif Press
1331 H Street NW
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 737-7764

Resources for video training tapes include the following:

Albuquerque Public Schools
Montgomery Complex
3315 Louisiana NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico
(505) 880-8249
Special Planning for Special People series

AMS Distributors
P.O. Box 457
Roswell, Georgia 30077
(404) 442-1945
1-800-424-3464
A variety of tapes specifically for special transporters

"Sharing the Challenge"
"Safely Home:"
Riley Hospital for Children
702 Barnhill Dr., S-139
Indianapolis, IN 46223
"Sharing the challenge": Three video tapes dealing with: 1) wheelchair transportation equipment, 2) school bus transportation of students with disabilities , 3) medically fragile children.
"Safely Home": safe transportation of orthopedic patients, including instruction on use and installation of the Spelcast Seat, Swinger Car Bed and Modified E-Z-On Vest.

"Two Minutes or Less"
BOCES #1, Attn: Cary
41 O'Connor Road
Fairport, NY 14450
Driver training video with teaching curriculum.

"I Never Thought it Would Happen to Me Again"
Driver Education Program
Humana Hospital Lucerne
818 S Main Lane
Orlando FL 32801
Proper methods of securing a wheelchair & its occupant in a van.

Additional resources include the local Council for Exceptional Children chapters.

You can contact your Director of Special Education for local contacts. the Council should be able to identify people who might be able to provide in-service sessions for your staff. Parent groups can also be a resource for you as can almost any inservice given for special education teachers. Don't forget to use teachers, school nurses and AEA consultants for in-service programs related to special education students, their needs and how to manage those needs. Community Colleges, University/Colleges and Teacher consultants are other sources of people who might be approached to provide sessions for you staff.

Other local resources can often be used for training programs. For example the American Red Cross has a "Back Injury Prevention Course." They may also provide a First Aid training course. The American Heart Association and the American Red Cross both are sources for CPR courses on a local basis.

Newsletters

Transporting Handicapped Students
P. O. Box 13460
Silver Spring, MD 20911-3460
Published every two weeks.

Safe Ride News
American Academy of Pediatrics
P. O. Box 927
Elk Grove, IL 60009-0927
Printed 4 times per year, no charge.

School Transportation Director
Federal News Services, Inc.
PO Box 13460
Silver Spring, MD 20911-3460

Pupil Transportation News
PO Box 191
Ford, NJ 08863

Publications

School Bus Fleet
PO Box 1939
Marion, OH 43305-1939

School Transportation News
PO Box 789
Redondo Beach, CA 90277

Manufacturers

Lifts. The following is a list of those who manufacture lifts that meet the specifications described above.

The Braun Corporation
1014 S. Monticello Street
Winamac, IN 46996
Phone: 219/946-6153
FAX: 219/946-4670
Manufactures wheelchair lifts and other accessories for transporting children with disabilities on school buses.

Crow River
14800 28th Ave. N.
Minneapolis, MN 55447
Phone: 612/559-1680
FAX: 612/559-0735
Manufactures electro-hydraulic wheelchair lifts for use in transportation vehicles.

Mobile-Tech Corporation
Subsidiary of Collins Ambutech Inc.
P. O. Box 2828
Hutchison, KS 67504-2828
Phone: 316/663-4441
FAX: 316/665-1072
Manufactures electro-hydraulic wheelchair lifts including Saf-T-Lifts and Step-Lifts, Safe-T-Lock wheelchair securement systems and Flip-Seats, a combination seat with Saf-T-Locks that will accept seated passengers or secure a wheelchair.

R.E.B. Mfg. Co.
State Route 568 W.
P. O. Box 276
Carey, OH 43316-0276
Phone: 419/396-7651
FAX: 419/396-6463
Manufacturers automatic, semi-automatic and passive (step type) lifts for vans and school buses.

Ricon Corp.
12450 Montague St.
Pacoima, CA 91331
Phone: 818/899-7588
FAX: 818/890-3354
Manufactures electro-hydraulic and all-electric wheelchair lifts.
FAX: 206/745-3934

Manufacturers: ***Wheelchair Securement.*** The following is a list of manufacturers that make wheelchair securement systems that meet the specifications listed above.

ANCRA International
4880 West Rosecrans Avenue
Hawthorne, CA 90250
Phone: 213/973-5000
Midwest Division, Illinois 708/628-1200

Kinnedyne Corp.
3701 Greenway Circle
Lawrence, KS 66046
Phone: 913/841-4000
800/848-6057
FAX: 913/841-3668

Q'Straint
4248 Ridge Lea Road
Buffalo, NY 14226
Phone: 716/831-9959
FAX: 716/837-7409

Creative Controls
32450 Dequindre
Warren, MI 48092
Phone: 313/979-3500

Ortho Safe Systems, Inc.
P. O. Box 9435
Trenton, NJ 08650
Phone: 609/587-3859
FAX: 609/587-7609

Tie Tech Inc.
P. O. Box 5226
Lynwood, WA 98046-5226
Phone: 206/743-5863

Manufacturers: ***Mobility Devices***

ETAC USA, Inc.
2325 Parklawn Drive
Suite P
Waukesha, WI 53186
414/796-4600

Everest & Jennings
3233 East Mission Oaks Blvd.
Camarillo, CA 93010
805/987-6911
800/2354661

Fortress
827 Jefferson
P. O. Box 489
Clovis, CA 93613-489

Invacare Corporation
Midwest Distribution Center
501 Industrial Drive
Box 706
Bensenville, IL 60106
800/323-8200

MEYRA, Inc
12 McCullough Drive, Suite #3
New Castle, DE 19720
302/324-4400
800/833-9962

Ortho-Kinetics, Inc.
W220 N507 Springdale Road
P. O. Box 1647
Waukesha, WI 53187
800/558-7786

Quickie Design, Inc.
2842 Business Park Avenue
Fresno, CA 93727-1328
209/292-2171
800/456-8165

Manufacturers: ***Passenger Restraint.*** The following are restraint systems manufacturers and suppliers. Restraints include belt systems, car seats as well as special systems for children with special needs.

E-Z-ON Products, inc.
500 Commerce Way West
Jupiter, FL 33458
Phone: 305/747-6920
800/323-6598
FAX: 407/747-8779

Provide a number of options for restraining children with a variety of needs. Options include:

Y-Harness (a 3-point harness that attaches to existing lap belt to secure shoulders and lower torso

E-Z-On Vests To transport children and teens with physical or behavioral disabilities. Modified version available for children who must travel lying down.

Snug Seat A positioning seat designed for infants and small children for proper positioning as a stroller, car seat and chair.

The Swinger Car Bed For baby up to 20 lbs and 26". Ideal for medically fragile babies.

Britax Special Seat For children 1-8 years old; 20 - 50 lbs (105 lbs with tether attachment) and up to 5" tall.

Koziatek & Associates
190 W. Boston Rd.
Hinckley, OH 44233-9631
Phone: 216/659-4961

SPELCAST car seat for use in transporting children with spica casts.

Evenflo
1801 Commerce Dr.
Piqua, OH 45356
Phone: 513/773-3971

Car seats: The Evenflo Dyno-Mite has a 3 point harness/2 strap positions and 2 recline positions for infants that need to recline during transport.

Tumble Forms (J.A. Preston Corp)
60 Page Rd.
Clifton, NJ 07012
Phone: 201/777-2700
800/631-7277

Makes the Carrie Seat which attaches to vehicles with lap belt and installed tether for toddlers and school children.